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CHRISTS

COMMUNION

WITH HIS

Church Militant.

First Preached, and now Published for the good of Gods Church in general.

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The fifth Edition.

BY

NICHOLAS LOCKYER
Master of Arts.

Cant. 1. 13.

A bundle of Myrrhe is my Welbeloved unto me, he shall lie all night betwixt my Breasts.

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TO THE
Vertuous Lady Aunt SUSAN CECILL,

Grace and peace be multiplied
BY
JESUS CHRIST.

Madam,

THe *ſweet taſte I have had of your Ladyſhips love to the beſt things, hath encouraged me, humbly to preſent this little Tract unto you.* *What* Solomon *ſpeaks from experience, that you upon trial have found true,* That the moſt promiſing contents of this life, are vanity and vexation of Spirit. *Our wiſe and mercifull Father doth uſually thus imbitter the ſweeteſt things of this world*

to us, that we may the more cordially relish, and fervently seek after that full satisfying, & everlasting sweetnes and comfort, which is in Communion with Christ our heavenly Husband, in whom all fulnes of consolation dwells: A drop of this transcendent fulnes your Ladyship (I hope) shall find distilled into your soul, by reading this little worke now come to your hands, which like Aqua Vitæ, *shall cheere and revive your sad spirit, when ready to faint. Fainting persons, carry little bottles of reviving liquids always about them; if your Ladyship shall think fit, to make this litle tract your pocket-Companion, and peruse a little of it still, when you feel soule-qualmes to seize upon you; you shall find (I trust) through the blessing of Christ, much ease and comfort; and so spend and end your aged dayes in more true solace of heart, than yet you have done your primest dayes of flourishing youth. The accomplishing of this, is the sincere and holy aime of your much obliged Nephew, in this his first offering to publike view.*

view. Which ſimple aime, that the Lord may graciouſly anſwer to your Ladyſhips comfort here, and eternal happineſſe hereafter, I ſhall ſtill continue my prayer (though here I end my Epiſtle) that the Lord will ſtill attend this my poor endeavor with his rich bleſſing, to all the partakers thereof; and in ſpeciall to you.

Your moſt obliged Nephew

NICHOLAS LOCKYER.

Christian Reader.

COmmunion with Christ is our happinesse in this World, and in the World to come: that which makes every sweet thing sweet, and every sweet thing sweeter. With this sweet subject is this little Tract now come to thy hand taken up. Poor fallen man is still complaining of one want or other; and when the thing is given which hee longed for, yet his soul is as farre from content, as before; like to a childe that cryes for this and that, and yet when hee hath what he cryed for, continues crying still, and cannot tell well what he would have. All our want is this, the want of Communion with Christ: this is the cause of all complaints; the infelicitie of the soul, the sum of mans misery,

h-re

here and hereafter, but poor blind man ſees it not, and therefore complains of twenty things, twenty miles at this ſide his diſeaſe; and ſo ſpends his days in labour and ſorrow, and yet loſes happineſſe, both here and hereafter too. A full fruition of Chriſt, is full felicitie: a full fruition of any thing below Chriſt, without Chriſt, is but vanity and vexation of ſpirit. The more then, O fallen man, thou canſt get into communion with thy God, the more will thy great loſſe be repaired, thy complaining ſoul ſatisfied, and thy tranquillitie ſetled upon thee again. Hunt not then after riches, honours, pleaſures, and ſuch like low delights of ſonnes of men, with this deluded miſtaken world, which lies in wickedneſs; for felicitie is not in theſe: but ſtudy and ſtrive after a neerer communion with Chriſt: the next way to get moſt in with him, is the ſpeedy way unto all happineſs: ſo much as thou canſt get of his company

ſo

ſo much art thou in Heaven. *How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God, how great is the ſumme of them? If I ſhould count them, they are more in number then the ſand: when I awake I am ſtill with thee,* Pſal. 134. 17, 18.

This is Heaven upon earth; and that true Nobilitie and Honour, which we ſhould be all ambitious after; to loſe our ſpirits in God. What an unſpeakable felicity is it, to be ſtill with God in our thoughts? This ennobles the ſpirit of man, and makes it a companion to the King of Kings: this gives evenneſs and ſteadineſs to a mans courſe; and makes him walk in all the ways of God blameleſs: this gives tranquillity to a mans ſpirit, and makes him unmoveable in the midſt of feares: this gives bread in famine, drink in drought, peace in warr, health in ſickneſs, life in death. Devote thy ſelf therefore to Chriſt, that he may devote himſelf to thee: and as a poor *medium* of communion, make uſe (if thou

pla-

pleaſe)of this enſuing Treatiſe. If thou get any good, give glory to God; and make the poor Pen-man, a conſtant ſharer in thy prayers.

Thine in Chriſt,

Theophilus Philanthropus.

The principall Heads handled in this Tract.

That the Church Militant of Christ, shall not be left comfortless, because Christ will com to her, Page 5

That Christ doth come to his Church Militant. p. 7

How Christ doth come to his church Militant, to comfort her in all conditions. p. 12

When Christ comes to his disconsolate church as a comforter. p. 27, &c.

Why Christ will come to his church upon earth, as a comforter. p. 31. &c.

Wicked men shall live and dy comfortless, because Christ as a comforter will never come to them. p. 35, &c.

Laughter is one thing, and spirituall consolation another. p. 37.

How

How Christ doth come to the wicked in this life, p.39

Christ will come to the wicked, neither in prosperity nor in adversity, as a comforter, p.40, &c.

How wicked men may get Christ as a comforter to come to them, p.43, &c

Useful instructions to strong men, and to babes in Christ, p.4,1

Strong men in Christ, that say Christ as a comforter is come to them, should make it sure to themselves, that they are not deluded, p.46.

The great need of this, p.*ib.*

How a man may know that it is Christ indeed and no spirit of delusion, which is come to him with consolation. p.48

Strong men in Christ, after they have made it sure to themselves, that the true comfort is come to them, should so walke that they may ever enjoy his sweet company, p,53

How Christians may so walk as to enjoy Christ as a comforter continually p,54

Babes in Christ which never found Christ

as

as a comforter to come to them, should believe that Christ will come to them. p 61.

Their objections against Christ coming to them as comforter, answered. p. 62

Babes in Christ that never found Christ as a comforter come to them, should patiently wait till Christ thus come to them. p. 64

Severall considerations very powerfull to make the Soul to wait patiently till Christ as a comforter come to him. p. 65

Babes in Christ, which never yet found Christ as a comforter to come to them, should observe how Christ comes with comfort to the soul, and not put him off. p. 72

Babes in Christ, which have found Christ as a comforter to come to them that now have lost him, should labour to be sensible of their loss. p. 74, &c

Such should not blame Christ for departing as a comforter from them, p. 77. &c.

Meanes how such Babes in Christ, may get their comforter to returne again to them p. 79. &c

2. Tim. 4. Verſe 22.

The Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with thy Spirit.

To have the Lord Jeſus Chriſt with our ſpirits, is a prime and principall bleſſing, p.83.

There is a double preſence of Chriſt with man, corporall and ſpirituall, joyntly or meerly ſpirituall, p.48,&c

The ſpirituall preſence of Chriſt with man upon earth, is commune or ſpeciall, p.85,&c.

To have Chriſt ſpecially preſent with our ſpirits, is the ready way to all temporall good. p.87.

Objections to the contrary, anſwered. p.88,&c

To have Chriſt ſpecially preſent with our ſpirits, is the way to all ſpirituall good p.91, &c.

To have Chriſt after a ſpeciall manner without ſpirits is the reaay way to eternal good, p.95.

Not to have Chriſt ſpecially preſent with our ſpirits is a great evil p 97.

Wherein

Wherein this grand evil doth principally consist, p.99,&c.

How to know whether Christ *be specially present with our spirits,* p. 107.&c

How to get Christ *to be speedily present with our spirits;* p.112,&c.

Men that finde Christ *specially present with their spirits, should thankfully acknowledge this great favour* p.115,&c.

Such should labour to keep Christ *with their spirits,* p.118

According to what operations, a man may lose the presence of Christ, p. 119,&c.

Christians should labour to get Christ *as much present with their spirits as may be: and how this may be done:* see page 121,122&c

Comfort against the Sword, Plague, Famine, Persecution, and the like, ariseth to them which have Christ *specially present with their spirits,* p.125, 126,&c.

Christ

CHRISTS COMMUNION With His Church Militant.

JOHN 14. verſ. 18.

I will not leave you comfortleſs; I will come to you.

CHriſt and his Church are dear each to other; the truth of this is at large manifeſt in this Chapter. Chriſt as a heavenly Husband, being to leave his earthly Spouſe; to wit, his Church Militant, and to live with his Father at his right hand in glory, with his Church triumphant, endeavoureth with various verſes

ſes of this chapter, to comfort the ſad ſpirit of his beloved Spouſe, which he perceived was much dejected. Th Verſe which I have choſen to inſiſt on, is one of them: *I will not leave you comfortleſs, I will come to you.* In more word let me repeat this verſe again. *Thou, O my Love, my Dove, my fair One, art ſad I ſee, and diſconſolate at my departure! As a Lilly in the valley; nay, as a Lilly (indeed, among thorns I ſhall leave thee: the Prince of darkneſs dwelling in the children of darkneſs, will endeavor to devoure thee: Sons of Belial will beſet thee, perſecute and torment thee, as they have done me before thee: but be not at this diſmayed, O faireſt of women! dejected, as one without all conſolation: for I will not leave thee comfortleſs, I will come to thee.*

What difference is there between a Priſon-houſe, and mine own houſe, if ſweet friends continually come to me there? 'Tis a priſon and no better we abide in, whilſt we dwell in the body: fetter'd we are with many luſts, and groan we

ve do, under the tyranny and oppreſſion
ſ a body of death; and O wretched
nen that we are, dwelling in theſe dun-
geons of clay, if no friend from Heaven
ome to us! 'Tis true, O my Spouſe, what
hou ſayſt; and therefore that thy dwel-
ing in the body may not be comfortleſs,
will come to thee. *I will not leave thee*
omfortleſs, I will come, &c.

The body is a priſon to the ſoul, and
he world is a Hell to both. The god of
his world is a devil, and the children of
his world devils, to the Spouſe of Chriſt.
The father torments her ſpirit, and the
hildren torment her fleſh, neither in bo-
y nor ſoul, whilſt in this world, can the
pouſe of Chriſt be quiet. We that are
hus in Hell upon earth, ſhall quickly
e comfortleſs, if no friend from Hea-
ven come to us. True, oh my Spouſe: but
o prevent this, *I will come to thee.* From
Heaven to Earth (indeed) is a long jour-
ney; but yet this I'le not ſtand on, ra-
ther then thou ſhalt be left comfortleſs,
in any condition upon earth, I will from

Heaven

Heaven come to thee. Let it be what weather 'twill, at what time 'twil, and be at mid-night thou need'ſt me, I will come to thee; *I will not leave you comfortleſs, I will come to you.*

Affliction hath made my friends upon earth forſake me, O my Saviour! wilt not thou my heavenly friend to ſerve me? What if the Devil caſt me into priſon? wilt thou come to me there? wilt thou viſit me when I lye in a naſty roome, amongſt naſty wretches, that curſe and ſwear, which thou canſt not endure to hear? Yea, O faireſt of women! rather then thou ſhalt be comfortleſs in ſuch a condition; *I will come to thee.*

Thou wilt come to me O my Saviour, one day, but what if the Devil keep me in ſuch a priſon *ten days*? a long time? till the *iron enter into my ſoul*? wilt thou not wax weary at laſt, and leave coming to me? No my love, I am reſolved to the contrary. [*I will not*] *leave thee comfortleſs*, [*I will*] *come to thee.*

Why

Why, but what if Satan winnow me as wheat, and caſt me into ſin, which is more odious to thee then any priſon, then any place, or any thing: wilt thou not then ſhake me off for ever, and never come to me more? This, O faireſt of women, may make me ceaſe comming to thee *for a moment*; but no longer: for I am reſolved not to [*leave*] *thee comfortleſs, I will come to thee.*

My Text, you ſee, is Chriſts conjugall promiſe to his Spouſe, of all kindneſs, during the time of his perſonal abſence. The matter of this promiſe is conſolatory; the form according to which our Saviour expreſſeth this conſolatory language, is firſt negative; *I will not leave you comfortleſs.* Secondly, affirmative; I *will come to you.* Theſe latter words contain the reaſon of what is delivered in the former. We cannot be comfortleſs; [*becauſe*] Chriſt ſtill comes to us. And thus takeing the words you may read them thus,

viz.

viz. I will not leave you comfortleſs, (for) *I will come to you.* No condition can be comfortleſs, if Chriſt come to us.

I will not leave you comfortleſs] Οὐκ ἀφήσω ὑμᾶς ὀρφανούς, *I will not leave you fatherleſs and motherleſs, I will not leave you Orphans,* ſaith the Original, ἀπορφανίζομαι, the word comes from, that is here tranſlated *comfortleſs,* which ſignifies, to be made fatherleſs and motherleſs; which becauſe it is uſually a condition very comfortleſs, therefore is the word thus rendred, ὀρφανὸς, *comfortleſs.* Thus the Children of Chriſt ſhall not be left. They are no *Orphans,* which have Chriſt for their father. They are never totally bereft of all comfort, to whom Chriſt comes: and thus he will ſtill do to his Church Militant. Chriſt will never leave coming from Heaven to Earth, although it be a very long journey, as long as he hath any one child upon earth. *I will not leave you comfortleſs.*

I will come to you] ἔρχομαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς, *I return to you,* ſaith the Original: ſpoken in the

the preſent Tenſe, and not in the Future, [I *will*] *return to you*, as we have it tranſlated, *Ac ſi diceret Chriſtus* (ſaith one) *ſe licet nondum profectum jam eſſe in reditu.* As if Chriſt had ſaid, although I am not yet gone from you, yet I am returned to you. Chriſt though not actually in perſon departed, yet was ready in ſpirit to be preſent with his Spouſe to the end of the world.

Thus having paraphraſtically gone over theſe words, I will put the plain meaning of them into this *Theſis* in Divinity, *that the Church of Chriſt Militant ſhall not be left comfortleſs becauſe Chriſt will come to her.* Or thus, *No Child of Chriſt upon earth ſhall be left comfortleſs, for Chriſt will come to him.* What Chriſt ſpake at his departure to his Diſciples, was not for them only, but for the comfort of all his people to the end of the world. In his Diſciples he ſpake thus to all his children, that are or ever ſhall be upon the

face of the earth, *I wil not leave you comfortleſs, I will come to you.*

This comfortable doctrine that I may fully and methodically handle, I will lay open unto you theſe four things: Firſt, that Chriſt doth come to his children upon earth. Secondly, how Chriſt doth come to his children upon earth. Thirdly, when Chriſt dothcome to his children upon earth. Laſtly, why Chriſt will take ſo much paines, as to come to his children on earth? I begin with the firſt of theſe, to wit, that Chriſt doth come to his Church and children upon earth. The truth of this isevident by ourSaviours own language, and by each godly mans experience.

Our Saviour, not only in my Text, but in many other places promiſed to come to his Church Militant, and therefore ſurely he doth come to his people on earth; for Chriſt is God, *and God cannot lie, nor repent*, what Chriſt

Christ hath said he will do, that he will faithfully performe to a tittle: *for faithfull is he that hath promised*, saith the Apostle. *Go therefore, and teach all Nations, &c. teaching to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world, Amen.* Mat. 28. 19, 20. This place shews plainly, that Christ doth come to his children upon earth; and that he will do this to the end of the world. For Ministers (of all men) to walke faithfully in their places, teaching their flock to *observe* [*all*] *things, that Christ hath given them in charge*; will cost them hot water: especially living in corrupt places. This our Saviour tenderly considered: and therefore that his Disciples might not be dishearted; he assures them of his company unto the last, to support and comfort them. *Lo I am with you to the end of the world.* Christ by his phrase of speech to hint us, that what he spake

ſhould reach further than unto thoſe to whom then he appeared, namely to all Miniſters and people *to the end of the world*, that ſhall faithfully diſcharge th. ir places and calling to his honour.

I might here tell you, that not onely Chriſts word, but alſo Chriſts name ſets forth the truth of this that Chriſt is with his Church Militant, and ſo conſequently, that he doth come to her. He was called *Emanuel*, which being interpreted, *Is God with us*. Mat. 123. Which name was not only to note Chriſt as then corporally preſent with his Church: but to note Chriſt as one having actually aſſumed our nature, and ſo to be more glorioufly preſent with his Church to the end of the world, that ever from the beginning after *Adams* fall. Now as ſhe ſaid of her husband, *as his name is, ſo is he, Nabal is his name, and folly is with him*: ſo may the Spouſe ſpeak of her Husband Chriſt; as his name is, ſo is he. *Emanuel* is his name, which ſignifies

ſignifies *God with us*, and ſo indeed is Chriſt. He is continually with us. What *David* ſaid of himſelf, in reſpect of Chriſt; that may we truly ſay of Chrſt, in reſpect of us. *Nevertheleſs* (ſaith he) *I am continually with thee; thou haſt holden me by my right hand.* Though Chriſt dwell in Heaven, and we on earth; yet nevertheleſs he is continually coming to us, and abiding with us.

The godly have, and do find the truth of this by bleſſed experience, which is the ſecond thing; and that which I rather inſiſt on, for the confirmation of the truth in hand; becauſe againſt experience there is no diſputation. *Peter* found the truth of this, that Chriſt comes to his children upon earth, that their condition may not be comfortleſs. *Herod* caſt *Peter* into priſon, and thought to have made him comfortleſs; but Chriſt came to him, as you may ſee. *And behold* (ſaith the Text) *the Angell of the* Lord *came upon*

him, and a Light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly: and his chains fell off from his hand. The Jews by a storm of stones thought to have made *Stephen* comfortless, but Christ comming to him prevented it. Christ so gloriously came to him in that deadly storm, that he found more comfort (I believe then ever he did before in his life: for *for he looked up stedfastly into Heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God:* he saw the Heavens opened ready to receive him, which transcendently revived him: which glorious vision he could never have seen had not Christ come to him. *Paul* like wise found the truth of this point when he had left *Athens*, and came to preach to the Gentiles at *Corinth*. He was very fearful what success he should find in his Ministry amongst the barbarous Gentiles Now our tender Saviour, that *Paul* might not be over-

borne

borne with feare, and made heartleſs, and comfortleſs, graciouſly comes to him in a viſion, as you may read, *Then ſpake the Lord to Paul by night in a viſion, Be not afraid, but ſpeak, and hold not thy peace; For I am with thee; and no man ſhall ſet on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this City.* Thus at another time Chriſt came to *Paul* that he might not be left comfortleſs, when he was pleading his cauſe before *Ananias*, and like to be pull'd in pieces. *And the night following* (ſaith the Text) *the Lord ſtood by him, and ſaid, Be of good cheere Paul, for as thou haſt teſtified of me in Jeruſalem, ſo muſt thou alſo bear witneſs at Rome.* At another time, *Acts* 23. 11. *Paul* and *Silas* together had experience of this truth, that Chriſt comes to his Church Militant. As they were pouring out their ſoules together in prayer, Chriſt wonderfully came to them: he came in an Earthquake, and made the *foundations of the priſon, ſhake* and ſo *opened all the priſon doores*,

doors, and looſed every priſoners bonds. Comfortable was Chriſts coming to *Paul* and *Silas*, but terrible to the Gaoler; for he ſeeing in what manner Chriſt broke in and reſcued his ſervant, would have killed himſelf; but Chriſt came graciouſly to his ſoul alſo, and reſcued it out of the hands of the Divel. Happy was it for this man, that Chriſt did finiſh two works in one journey; to wit, come to *Paul* and *Silas*, and delivered their bodies out of priſon: and withal come to their Gaoler, and delivered his ſoul out of priſon too. In an Earth-quake came both to priſoners and Gaoler: for the Gaoler came *trembling* to the Priſoners of hope, as a man in deſpair *and fell down*, ſaith the Text, *before Paul and Silas.* 'Tis no matter how Chriſt come to us, ſo he comfort us before he leave us. Thus *I* have ſhewed to you, that *Chriſt* doth come to his Church Militant.

The ſecond thing that *I* am to ſhew you,

you, for the opening of the point; is, how Christ doth come to his Church Militant. To this I will answer, First, more generally, and briefly: Secondly, more particulary and fully. More generally and briefly, *I* answer thus: Christ visits his Church Militant; as *David* visited and comforted *Hanun*, to wit, mediately by his spirit, as *David* did mediately by his servants. *And I will pray the Father, & he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the* [*Spirit of truth,*] *&c.* Joh. 14. 16, 17. *Peter* found the truth of this, that Christ by his Spirit comes now to his Church Militant. *While Peter thought on the vision,* [*the Spirit*] *said unto him, behold three men seek thee.*

But in the second place, that *I* may more particularly and fully answer to this question; to wit, how Christ doth come to his Church Militant, to comfort her in all conditions; *I* will lay before you the general conditions

of mankind: and shew you how Christ by his Spirit as a comforter, comes to us in them. The generall conditions of mankind are two, *prosperity* and *adversity.*

Prosperity would soon bring the souls of Gods people to a comfortless condition, did not Christ by his Spirit come to them; Satan that evill spirit is so busie, comming to the children of God, when in prosperity, that did not Christ also come to them by his Almighty Spirit, to quench all his fierie darts; their souls would soon be comfortless, the Lord knows. When *Peter* was warme in the high Priests Hall, then the devil by a damsell came to him, and so far he prevail'd on him; that had not Christ lookt back upon him, and by his Spirit come to him, he had been in a comfortless condition indeed. And thus would the condition of good men now be, which are warm in their nests with outward things, did not Christ come to them:

when

when the ſons of God be honourable and great amongſt the ſons of men, as *David* and *Solomon*, *Job*, *Jacob*, and *Abraham* were; then the divel in point of policy, though not out of love, viſits them often; and by often comming to them then, draws their precious ſouls into many ſinns, as pride, ambition, malice, ſenſuality, and the like; which like cankers, quickly fret and eat out all divine conſolation in the ſoul, and leave it like the Prodigal feeding upon huſks; ſolacing itſelf with no other joy and content. then what the bare creature dipt in ſin will afford the ſenſe, which you muſt needs ſay, is of all comfortleſs conditions the moſt and worſt comfortleſs. Now that theſe may not beleſt in this comfortleſs ſtate, to periſh eternally, Chriſt by his Spirit thus comes to them. Firſt, in a ſweet ſtill voice behind them, as the Prophet ſpeaks; ſaying, ſometimes in the midſt of their ſenſuality, this is not the way to eternal

nall joy: no, this is the way, O ſenſual ſoul, walk in it.

This ſtill voice ſtrikes a damp in the merry ſenſual ſoul of a Chriſtian, and makes his heart in the midſt of vain laughter ſad. If this be not prevalent enough to turn him, but on again he will in his ſinful way: then Chriſt comes with a witneſſe, in thundring and lightning, to convince and ſting the conſcience, as he did to the Iſraelites to bring them to ſee their wickedneſſe in chuſing a King untill God thundr'd and lightned from Heaven fearfully, they laid not to heart their rejecting God as their King, but went on ſtrongly and unaffectedly in their way. And juſt thus oft times it is with many of the ſons of God in proſperity: the ſtill voice of Chriſt ſweetly ſuggeſting and mildely checking for ſin, is not ſtrong enough to turn them, untill the Angel of the covenant come down into the conſcience, & ſtand with a flaming Sword, threatning

ning nothing but Hell and Death, if they make one ſtep further, they ſtop nor turn not; which though not Chriſts natural carriage to his children, yet he will in tender love deny himſelf thus far, as to put on an affrighting Vizard upon his ſmiling countenance, and come terribly, and ſave violently, by plucking his children out of the fire, rather then he will leave any of his ſo comfortleſſe, as to periſh remedileſs. Chriſt will ſpeak out and plain, as he did to *David* by *Nathan*, when a ſtill voice, ſecret ſilent hints and becks will not do, he will come and lay his mouth to mans ear, and cry aloud, when he perceives that the pleaſure or profit of ſin hath made him very deaf: he will never leave crying and calling, ſtriking and knocking, till he hath made the deaf ſouls hear, and humble himſelf with *Peter* and *David*, and then he pulls off the terrible Vizard from his countenance, and looks upon the mourning

peni-

penitent, with a countenance like *Lebanon*, and his lips drop sweet smiling myrrh, into his broken spirit: and so is not left comfortless, according to Christs promise, *I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you.*

But suppose Satan should not be busie, coming to the sons of God in prosperity; yet would worldly prosperity be a comfortlesse condition should not Christ by his Spirit come to them. Riches and honours, together with all other delights of the sons of men, they are as the white of an Egge, things without savour, unlesse comes along with them to us: they tire and weary, prick, distract and vex a man: they rob him of his sleep, and many times of his wits, nay, of his precious life: they drown mans soul in pride, voluptuousnes, security, so sets them in the next way to Hell. This snare waits at every ungodly mans Table, which makes his prosperity to him comfortless. This snare, that it may not

catch

catch the godly; Christ comes to them by his Spirit, and sanctifies prosperity by them: *He teaches them how to abound* that is, how so to use the creature, as to enjoy service and comfort from it: and to bring honour and glory by it.

The creature is emptie of what it promiseth; and entising with what it hath: and this makes prosperity to every carnall man, a comfortless condition. Now to take off both these; Christ comes to his children which enjoy the creatures, plenteously: he comes in the creatures, and so cures the emptiness of it: that is, by his blessing he makes it satisfiable and contentfull to the enjoyer, which 'tis not of it self; this is the peculiar gain that attends the godly: Christ comes in the creature to them, and so cures the emptiness of it, and puts such supernatural vertue and sweetnesse in it; that *they are there with contented.* And as Christ comes [*in*] the creature to cure the emptiness of it so he comes [*with*] the creature, to cure

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the entising of it. He doth by the creature lead the souls of his children to the Creatour: by the sweet of the one, he lifts up their souls to heaven, to admire the sweetnesse of the other: so that, that which others are enticed and besotted with, and rest in, that they take wings from to flee to heaven, whence comes every good and perfect gift, which is that indeed that makes prosperity a comfortable condition; which otherwise is comfortlesse enough, the Lord knows.

Secondly, adversity would be a comfortlesse condition to the godly, if Christ by his *Spirit* did not come to them: This I suppose none will deny: *For no affliction in it self is comfortable or joyfull*, but comfortlesse, if Christ by his Spirit do not come to us. Corporall affliction is a comfortless condition, unless Christ come to us, and be our Physitian. *Spirituall* affliction is a more comfortless condition, if Christ do not come to us.

Here

Here these two questions are necessary to be answered: First, how doth Christ come to us in corporal affliction? Secondly, how doth Christ come to us in Spiritual affliction?

To these questions both together, I thus answer: Christ the Physitian of soul and body, comes to both with comfort in one way; and that is, by helping the soul to apply the promises of God, which are suitable to his distress. If a child of God be sad and sorrowfull, because of corporall affliction, Christ comes to him by his Spirit, with this comfortable language, *I am all-sufficient.* Christ by his Spirit, spreads abroad this Cardinall promise before the sad soul, and shews him what a depth of mercy is folded up in it. There is a sufficiency of wisdom in me to finde out wayes and means to deliver thee, though never so low brought. There is likewise a sufficiency of power, to prosecut right means to accomplish their right end.

Nay

Nay, there is a sufficiency in me t work about good for thee, O sad soul without meanes.

There's a sufficiency of affection and will, to declare power and wisdome, with every attribute else, for thy good. If for all this application and amplification of a generall promise, the soul still droop under some corporall calamity; Christ doth then in such a soul, as *Jacobs* sons and daughters did for him. *They rose up* (saith the Text) *and comforted him*, Gen. 37.35. So Christ by his Spirit, after a lively manner indeed, rises up in such a soul to comfort him: and now he leads this mourning Christian to some particular promise; that is, such a promise as speaks not of deliverance in particular, out of this or that kind of distress, which he groanes under. As, to give you an instance; suppose a Christian be sad, and take thought as Christ saith, *What he shall eat, and what he shall drinke, and wherewithall he shall be clothed*: then the Com-

Comforter comes with this particular promiſe, which ſpeakes of deliverance out of this particular diſtreſſe. *Firſt, ſeek the Kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs; and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you: take therefore no thought for to morrow, for to morrow ſhall take thought for the things of it ſelf.* Mat. 6. 33, 34. If yet for all this the ſpirit of a Chriſtian ſtill complain, as one fearing he ſhall want daily bread for him and his; then the comforter comes, and perſwades the ſoul to reſt quietly upon the promiſe of God. He ſpeakes now to the complaining Chriſtian, as the Levites father in law did to him, *comfort thy ſelf, I pray thee, with a morſell of bread.* Judges 19. Comfort thy ſelf, O mourning ſoul, I pray thee, with this particular promiſe, which is but a morſel of that bread, which came down from heaven, one of the leaſt favours that Chriſt hath procured for thee, to wit, a right and intereſt in the creature: with this perſwaſive language, doth

Chriſt

Christ follow the complaining soul untill he hath perswaded him to own his mercy; and so he keeps his children in poverty, from being comfortless.

As Christ in corporal afflictions comes to his children, and keeps them from being comfortless; so likewise he comes to them in spiritual afflictions, that they may not be comfortless. If a child of God be sad and sorrowful, because of this or that strong temptation; the Comforter then comes to him with this sweet language: *My grace is sufficient for thee.* Thou prayest, and Satan tempts thee; thou dost fast and pray, and yet Satan and thy lusts are more violent upon thee; thou dost all with bitter tears, and Satan is the more bitterly bent against thee, and thou art foil'd every moment. By this, O winnowed soul! Christ would shew thee that thou wilt be comfortless, in the midst of all thy sore soul-labour unlesse he come to thee. *This same*

shall

ſhall comfort us, concerning the work and toil of our hands, ſaid *Lamech* of *Noah*: ſo may we ſay of Chriſt; this ſame muſt comfort us, concerning the labour and toil of our ſouls with any temptation: or elſe we ſhall be comfortleſs though we labour never ſo much. And this Chriſt doth and will do, *I will not leave you comfortleſs, I will come to you.*

If a Chriſtian lie languiſhing becauſe of Satans prevailing upon him by temptation; that we may not be comfortleſs in this condition, Chriſt by his Spirit comes to him, and ſhews him the fountain of his blood, how deep it is, and how free it is. How deep it is, that it will drown all ſin, ſins often repeated, as well as ſins only committed. And then he ſhews the wounded ſoul, how free this fountaine is, for *any that hunger and thirſt for it, for any that are weary and heavy laden*, 1 John 1. 7. and deſire to be eaſed by it, and ſo by degrees of

wounds in it by faith, and so Christ heales and comforts him. As the brethren of *Ephraim* comforted him, when he mourned because the men of *Gath* had slaine his son. 1 *Chro.*7. 22. so Christ comes to us, and comforts us, when the devill by his temptations hath almost slain our souls, he like the good Samaritan, poures in Oyl and Wine into our wounds, and cures us. Though Satan pass by, and leave us comfortless in the day of wounds and bleeding, yet Christ cannot, so full of bowels is he, nor will not, *I will not leave you comfortless, &c.*

If a Christian lie languishing, because of often and fequent relapses, after promises and purposes to do better If this Christian in the anguish of his spirit speak to every godly friend, as the Prophet did to his. *Therfore, said I, look away from me, I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, because of the spoyling of the daughter of my*

my people, Isai. 22. 24. Look away from me, O ye my christian friends! yea, and you, my faithful Ministers, for I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, because of the spoyling of my soul, by so often sinning, against vows and promises, favours and blessings: Christ comes to this soul and will not leave him comfortless in this condition, (though it be indeed a very desperate condition.) The comforter usually takes this course, with this comfortless soul, to poure in some oyle into his deep wounds: he reasoneth with him from the mercy man, to the mercy of God: from a drop to the Ocean; & it may be, fastens upon his own language once delivered to *Peter*. *Peter came to our Saviour and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee untill seven times, but untill seventy times seven.* Matthew 18. 21, 22. From this speech, the comforter reason-

thus reasoneth, with this sad and sore wounded soul, *viz.* If Christ would have *Peter*, a sinfull man: shew so much mercy to one, so often offending him; surely Christ, a holy God, and infinite in love, is ready to shew much more compassion himself, to those that are penitent, though they have sinned times without number against him. Thus the Comforter leads this desperate Christian, as a weak wounded man by the hand: from the mercy of man to the mercy of God: and enables him this way, after some space of time, to take in comfort: for Christ is resolved, he will not leave this Christian comfortless. Christ will never leave coming to this comfortlesse soul, with this speech of his to *Peter*, and others of like nature (as Christ is well furnisht for a comforter) untill he hath brought him to drink willingly (for Christ forceth no Physick upon any Patient) of the cup of consolation more or less

and

and the longer ſick ſoules turn away their heads from this cup, the more (many times) he perſwades them to drink at laſt.

If Chriſt *tentandi gratia*, for trials ſake, hide himſelfe from a Chriſtian, and ſo ſet him mourning; I ſhall ſhew you by and by how he comes to him. This is a condition (though of all deſerted conditions, the beſt) which will make a chriſtian heart comfortleſs indeed. *Thou didſt hide thy face and I was troubled*, Pſal 30. 7. God hiding his face though but for trials ſake will ſo trouble a chriſtian, that he will quickly be a burthen to himſelf, *and feare round about*, as tis ſaid of *Paſhur*. 'Twill make him weary of the night, and weary of the day; weary of his own houſe, and weary of Gods houſe; weary of mirth, and account it madneſs; weary of Riches, Honours, yea, life it ſelf, and wiſh for death. *O that I might have my requeſt, and that God would grant me the thing*

that I long for, even that it would pleaſe God to deſtroy me, that he would let his hand looſe and cut me off; then ſhould I yet have comfort: then ſhould I ſee the face of God, which I long like *Moſes* to ſee: then would he lift up the light of his loving countenance, and cauſe his face to ſhine glorioufly upon me, whereas now I walke in the valley and ſhadow of death; dark days are all that go over my head; the glorious Son of righteouſneſs ſhines not upon my ſoul, from morning to night. To this ſad ſoul thus bemoaning himſelf for want of his beloved, Chriſt his wel-beloved thus comfortably comes. *There hath no temptation taken hold on thee yet, O mourning ſoul, but that which is common to man: and be aſſured of this; that God is faithfull by whom thou art tempted, and will not try thee above that which thou art able, but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that thou maiſt be able to bear it.*

it. 1 Cor. 12. 15. For a moment, O faireſt of Women, I ſaw juſt cauſe to hide my face from thee, to try the truth of thy love to me; but know, that with everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy on thee. Thy dulneſs alſo in my ſervice, and thy low prizing my company, did ſomething trouble me; but know, *that the mountains ſhall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindneſs ſhall never depart from thee, for this is as the waters of* Noah *unto me; as I have ſworne that the waters of* Noah *ſhould no more go over the earth; ſo have I ſworne that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. O thou afflicted, and toſſed with tempeſt, and not comforted; behold, I will lay thy ſtones with faire colours, and lay thy foundations with Saphirs, and I will make thy windows of Agats, and thy gates of Carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleaſant Saphirs,* Iſai. 45. 8,9. Out of this ſweet language of the prophet to the naturall branch, the comforter will fetch ſuch precious water of life,

to revive his deserted soul: with these kisses of his lips will he so comfort him; that he shall be constrained to say with *David*: *Thou, which hast shewed me great troubles, hast quickned me again, and hast brought me up againe from the depths of the earth: thou hast increased my joy, and comforted me on every side.* Psal. 71. 6. I could hitherto, O my God, see thy back-parts: some sad attributes of power and justice, which did terrifie my soul to look on: but lo, now I see thy glory, thou hast caused it gloriously to pass by me; nay, to shine upon me: *I* see thy face like Lebanon, comly as the Cedars; and herewith is my longing soul satisfied as with marrow and fatness. *This is my comfort, in mine affliction; for thy Spirit, O Christ by thy word hath revived me.* So that this soul, though very sorrowfull: yet is not left comfortless neither. Thus I have answered the second *Quære*, to wit, how Christ comes to us.

The

The third thing that *I* am to shew you, is, When Christ comes to us. *I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you.* But when, O my Saviour, wilt thou come to us? To this *I* answer first more generally, then more particularly and determinately. More generally and briefly *I* answer thus. Christ is already come, and is present with his Church Militant. and will be to the end of the World, as hath bin already proved. *I am come into my Garden, my Sister, my Spouse, I have gathered my Myrrh with my Spice: I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk,* Cant. 5. 1. Christ we see by this sweet language is come, and is with us already, *I am come, &c.*

But when will he come to me in particular, as a comforter? This is the question. To this I answer, first negatively, then positively. Negatively *I* answer thus: *viz.* Christ doth not come to us in this valley of

tears, as *Aaron* was commanded to come into the holy place: *Let him not come at all times*, ſaith the Lord, *leſt he dy*. Levit. 16.2. If Chriſt ſhould not come to us at all times of our diſtreſs; we ſhould dy under our burthen, ſo comfortleſs would be our condition. When my body is afflicted, I ſhall be comfortleſs, if Chriſt do not come to me. When my ſoul is afflicted, I ſhall be comfortleſs, if Chriſt do not graciouſly come tome. When my head akes, teeth akes, back akes, or belly akes: yea, when my leaſt finger, or joynt in my body akes, I ſhall be comfortleſs, unleſs Chriſt come to me, ſo dolorous and comfortleſs a creature is man.

Wherefore as a poſitive anſwer to the queſtion ere while propoſed, know, that Chriſt comes to his Church Militant at all times: as long as his people live in this valley of teares, and are in any diſtreſs of ſoul or body. He comes

to

to them in prosperity, to sweeten that, or else there would be but a little comfort and sweetness in it; but he comes to them in all adversity, after a more special manner to sweeten that, being of it self very bitter; betterness in the abstract: my meaning is, altogether bitter, without the least sweetness or pleasure in it, to soul or body; for no affliction is in the least manner or measure joyous, but as Christ, by his kind comming to us then, makes it so.

But here *I* shall be thus questioned: *viz.* If Christ as a Comforter comes to his Church Militant, in every distress of soul and body: how is it that many of Gods children in corporal and spiritual afflictions, utter comfortless and hopeless language, as those that finde no Comforter come to them? *Is thy mercy clean gone, and hast thou forgotten to be gracious* (saith *David*) *hast thou shut up thy loving kindness in displeasure, and wilt thou be no more in-*

treated? &c. Many such like sad and dolorous complaints are still uttered by some of Gods dear children: now if Christ as a comforter, come to his in every distress, why is it thus with these?

To this I will give answer, first more indirectly thus. Possibly that soul which thus complains; cannot but confess, that Christ hath come and tendred comfort to him: though he through anguish and unbelief refused it. Now if our soul-Physician come from Heaven to us, and bring cordials for us, and we will not take them, but cast them behinde our backs: shall our Physician be blamed for unfaithfulness and negligence towards his Patients, as one that did not visit them?

Again, possibly too, this Soul which thus complains, must confess that Christ came to him, at the very beginning of his untractableness towards God, and told him that this would

would quickly bring him into a comfortleſs condition, if not timely look unto: and bid him again and again, by a ſweet ſtill voice behinde him, to be more pliable to God, as he tendred his favour, and his own comfort. Chriſt came to his Spouſe, ſaying, *Open to me my Siſter, my love, my Dove my fair one, for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.* But though Chriſt thus kindly came to his Spouſe, yet ſhe unkindly put him off: and upon the matter no better then ſlighted him. *I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them?* &c. Becauſe of this untractable carriage, Chriſt departed from his Spouſe, and then ſhe made many complaints. *I opened to my beloved, but he had withdrawn himſelf and was gone.* The Spouſe could not now truly ſay, that Chriſt had not come to her; but ſhe might truly ſay, that he did come to her, but ſhe ſlighted him, and there-

for he was forced to leave her. Thus 'tis with many now. They mourne like *Rachel* in their misery, and are not comforted, because none from Heaven comes to them: such as these, cannot challenge Christ, for not makeing good his promise, to come to them if formerly he have come to them, and they have slighted him. If my Physitian, observing my intemperancy in this or that, come to me and tell me, unless you refraine such and such things, you will certainly fall into such and such diseases, which are very dangerous; if I slight him in this, and afterward fall into those diseases, and lye groaning under them, I cannot blame my Physitian, for not coming to me, but blame my self that did so slight him. So 'tis between Christ and many a mourning soul; Christ hath come to them and told them, that if they go on in their sinfull course, and that, that it will rob them quite of their Heavenly comforts; but he

he in this friendly way hath been ſo farre taken with the ſweetneſs of ſome thing below Chriſt, and ſo at laſt hath found the evill of his own way, according to Chriſts Prediction, and yet complains of Chriſt not comeing to him; but how juſtly judge you.

Againe, as this ſoul poſſibly cannot juſtly complaine, that Chriſt hath not come to him: ſo poſſibly he cannot juſtly complaine, that Chriſt is not come to him: That ſoul which complaines after Chriſt cannot truly ſay, that Chriſt is not come to him; for we never truly deſire to come to Chriſt, or that Chriſt ſhould come to us, unleſs he were already with us, and we with him. Chriſt, I conclude then, is come to this complaining ſoul, though not in that manner and meaſure as he deſires him. The thought of what I long for, if I have leaſt hope of attaining it: is a degree of conſolation.

Finally and more directly, I answer to this complaining soul thus, Christ as a sensible and satisfactory Comforter, comes to us at his time, and not at ours. Now Christs time to comfort mourners will make him most welcome: and that is usually when the soul is brought to the greatest extremity, that it is capable of, and not utterly miscarry. When *Peter* was ready to sinke on the Sea, and cryed out, *Master, save me or I perish*, then Christ came to him, and caught him by the hand: thus doth Christ usually come with sensible and satisfactory consolations, when poor souls are almost quite spent with temptations, and soul anguish, and look every houre when they shall dy and drop into hell. *He shall come to us, as the latter and former raine unto the earth*, saith the Prophet, That is, at the seasonablest time, when the soul will make him most welcome: and that is, when burnt and scorcht with Satans fierie darts, as the

earth

earth with the heat of the Sun, when parcht and chapt, gaping for some heavenly ſhowers; then Chriſts viſits will be kindneſs indeed: and Chriſts conſolations, ſweet indeed. This ſtill remember, O mourning ſoul, that Chriſt keeps his word, if he do not *leave us comfortleſs*; and this be aſſured he will not do, *I will not leave you comfortleſs, I will come to you.*

But why wilt thou come to me, O my Saviour? To this I anſwer, firſt thus; *viz.* Chriſt will come to his Church Militant to be a comforter to fulfil his Fathers will. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*, ſaith Chriſt, *becauſe the Lord hath anointed me, to preach good tidings to the meek: He hath ſent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the Captive, and the opening of Priſon to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, to comfort all that mourn, &c.* By this Text we ſee, that Chriſt is anointed for this end; To come to us

and

and be our Comforter whilst we live here below mourning in *Sion*. What is said of the three friends of *Job*, that may I say of the blessed Trinity, *They made an Appointment together, to come to comfort him*. So the blessed Trinity have made an Appointment together to us by Christ: and in all distresses, sweetly to comfort us.

Secondly, Christ will come as a comforter to his Church Militant, because he hath promised it. As Christ promised this in my Text, so in many other Texts. *And if I go away, I will prepare a place for you, and will come again: and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that may abide with you for ever.* By these Promises Christ hath obliged himself to come as a Comforter to us: let therefore our deservings of comfort be what they will; Christ will come to us, because he hath promised he will. Christ stands much upon his word: Christ is God, and

and *God cannot lye. Though we beleeve not, yet he abideth faithfull, and cannot deny himselfe.* A Christian is ready to say to Christ as *Jephtha* to the Elders of *Gilead*: *Did not ye hate me, and expell me out of my Fathers house? and why are ye come to me now, when ye are in distress?* said *Jephtha*. So saith a christian, did not I hate thee, O my Saviour, and did not I do what in me lay to expel thee from my soul, by my sinning again and again against thy Spirit? And why art thou come to me now, to comfort me in my distress? Why, this that was foresaid, may suffice, O sinfull soul, as an answer. Christ looks not at what thou hast done, but at what he hath promised: and his word he will keep, though we change as the Heavens: heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot of his word shall fal to the ground. *I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you.*

These

These *I* conceive are the principal Grounds, why Christ comes as a comforter to his Church Militant: two Grounds more may be alledged, as *Causæ minus principales*, less principal causes: the first whereof is this, Christ comes to us in our distresses as a comforter, that we may not stretch out our hands unto iniquity. Man in distress is so desirous of ease, that if Christ do not come to him and comfort him, he'll go to Sin and Sãtan for ease. *Cain* was disconsolate, and because Christ did not come to him as a comforter: he ran like a vagabond up and down the world, to finde ease in any thing. *Judas* was disconsolate, and because Christ as comforter did not come to him, he made a halter his comforter. *Saul* being in distress by the *Philistines*, because Christ did not come to him by *Urim*, nor by Vision, nor by Prophets, he went to the devil for comfort. Now that Christs children may not thus do, *Christ will*

not leave them comfortleſs, but will come to them.

The ſecond ground why Chriſt will come to his Church Militant as a comforter, is this: That he may ſtop the mouthes of all ungodly wretches, who ſay of the ungodly when in great diſtreſſes, *Perſecute and take them, for there is none to deliver them.* A wicked man looking upon a wounded ſoul with a carnal eye, breaks out into ſome ſuch language as *Achiſh* did concerning *David*, *Lo, you ſee the man is mad.* This man is a diſtracted perſon, fitter for *Bedlam* then for Gods houſe: an idle crackt-brain'd fellow, unfit to come into ſolemn Aſſemblies: Now that Chriſt may ſilence ſuch black-mouth'd men as theſe, he graciouſly comes to ſuch wounded ſouls, and heals their broken hearts, and binds up their wounds: he poures the Spirit of conſolation upon ſuch as went mourning all the day long, and makes them walk with joy and ſtrong

ſtrong conſolation, ſo that ſuch as cenſured them for this and that, are forced to lay their hand upon their mouth, and to condemn themſelves as blind Bats, and not able to diſcern the wayes of God towards his children.

Having thus opened the point in hand, *I* will in the next place ſhew you how uſefull it is, to the wicked and to the godly. Will not Chriſt leave any of his children upon earth comfortleſs, but ſtill as a comforter come to them? Then you which live in your ſins, and ſo conſequently none of Chriſt children; may collect the unhappineſs of your condition from this point. You ſhall live and die comfortleſs, for Chriſt will not come to you as a comforter; thus he comes only to his children. Chriſt will not come to you in proſperity as a comforter; and therefore in the midſt of ſenſuall laughter, your hearts will be ſad, in the midſt of all thy worldly contents

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thy ſpirit will at times gnaw and beat within thee: and never will all thou enjoyeſt give any complacency of comfort to thee, becauſe Chriſt as a comforter comes not to thee. All outward comforts, without the inward conſolations of Chriſt, they are as good broath unſeaſoned, which rather cloys then content the appetite; they weary, diſtract, and vex, and not revive the owner. Be it, that thou art as wiſe as *Achitophel*, as eloquent as *Herod*, as learned as *Gamaliel*, as rich as *Nabal*, as honourable as *Haman*, as great in the Church as *Iudas*; why, yet ſhalt thou live comfortleſs; that is, utterly deſtitute of celeſtial conſolation; one drop whereof hath more ſoul reviving ſweetneſs in it, then all the things of this life can afford. Alas! what is learning? what is wit, wealth, honour, or any other worldly thing to comfort me, if Chriſt do not come to me. A man may have all that this world can afford

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and yet hang himself for want of comfort, if Christ come not to him, as *Achitophel*, *Judas*, and others have done.

Ob. No men laugh louder, nor laugh oftner then wicked men in prosperity; no man merrier in an Alehouse, Playhouse, Tavern, Fair or Market, then they; and are not these then the only comfortable men in the world.

Sol. To this I answer first thus; Laughter is one thing, and spiritual consolation another thing. Every one that laughs hath not a cheerful spirit within; for in the midst of laughter a mans heart may be sad, saith *Solomon*. And so on the other hand, every one that hath a comfortable spirit, hath not a laughing face; We do not read that Christ ever laughed, and yet had more comfort in his Spirit, then all the merry men of this world.

Secondly, I answer thus; some mens

mens ſpirits are ſo left of God to levity and vanity, that they will laugh at the wagging of a ſtraw (as we ſay) This is a great judgement of God upon the ſpirit, and not to be counted a comfortable and happy condition? *'Tis a paſtime to fools to do wickedly*, ſaith *Solomon*. This is not properly called *mirth* (ſaith he) but *madneſs*. You ſhall ſee mad men laugh ſometimes exceedingly, and hoop and hollow, as if their ſpirits were as full of joy as they could hold: what ſhall we conclude now, that theſe forelorn creatures are in a comfortable condition? Alas, ſay we, if they were but ſenſible of their condition, they would ſoon ceaſe laughing, and begin lamenting. And ſo may I ſay to you of all that laugh and rejoyce, and yet live in their ſins, and ſo conſequently have no comforter from Heaven come to them, they are mad men; were their eyes open to ſee their forlorn condition, they would quickly change their note,

note, and turn their mirth into mourning, as *James* saith.

Quest. Why, but doth not Christ come to the wicked in prosperitie?

Answ. Yes, no doubt to be made of it. Christ came to *Belshazzar* whilst he was quaffing in the golden vessels of the temple, and wrote down his wickedness in the Wall. And thus he comes to all ungodly persons in prosperity, to write down all their ungodly deeds, that so he may exactly judge them at the great day of account.

Quest. Why, but doth not Christ come as a comforter, to wicked men that are great and wealthy?

Ans. Christ regards no man for his wealth, or for any external greatness If a man be never so rich, or never so honourable, yet if he have not denyed his lusts, and given up himself to Christ, to be ruled by him, Christ will never come to comfort him, if he would give him all he hath for his

his paines, he will not ſtep a foot out of doors to a Prince, if he be wicked

Ob. Why, but though he will not come to ungodly men as a comforter in proſperity, when they can make ſome ſhift without him, yet he will come to them as a comforter in adverſity, when all other comforts faile.

Sol. No, he will not. Chriſt will not know thy ſoul in adverſity, which art a diſobeyer of him. As he would not let *Dives* have a drop of water to cool his tongue, though in unutterable torments, where many Oceans would not in the leaſt meaſure have quench'd the flames; no neither will he afford thee the leaſt drop of conſolation in thy greateſt extremity; though thou cry Lord, Lord, and cut thy fleſh in the fervency of thy ſpirit, like *Baals* Prieſts, to prevaile; yet ſhalt thou be ſent empty away. Nay, Chriſt will be ſo farre from being a cómforter to ungodly

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men when in misery; that he will adde to their outward misery, inward misery. When thy body is in distress, Christ will awaken thy soul, that now lies asleep, and set thy conscience a gnawing within thee, which will be greater torture then if thou wert rackt in every limb. Thou mayst send for godly Ministers and godly friends to comfort thee then, and they possibly may deliver very comfortable things; but they shall be of no more savour to thy soul, then the white of an egge; because Christ as a comforter will not speak those sweet things to thy soul, which thy friends do to thy eares. As the Lord bewails the miserable condition of *Jerusalem*, so may I bewail the miserable condition of all ungodly men. *These two things are come unto thee, who shall be sorry for thee? desolation and destruction, and the famine and the sword: by whom shall I comfort thee?* So I say to all ungodly persons, misery upon

upon miſery will firſt or laſt ſeize upon you, and who then ſhall be ſorry for you? Famine, and ſword, and peſtilence; ſickneſſe, and death, and judgement; and by whom will you be comforted? your Honours cannot comfort you: your Riches and Friends cannot comfort you: your father the Devill he will not then comfort you: Your conſcience which you have often ſinned againſt ſhall not comfort you, but torture you: becauſe Chriſt will not come to you, to ſprinkle it with his blood, and to pacifie it: So that I conclude all thus: you will live comfortleſs, die comfortleſs, and abide in hell after death everlaſtingly comfortleſs.

'Tis true, all that you ſay, Sir; man is a comfortleſs creature indeed, unleſs Chriſt come to him, I finde it by woful experience. I have much wealth in my purſe, yet but little peace in my ſpirit. I ſee the devi

(methinks) now and then, sit astride upon the top of my money-bags, waiting for me, when I come to comfort my self in the beholding of them: and to what this will come at last I cannot tell. Sinne I am sure I do; and comfortless, because of sin, I am: and more comfortless every day I look to be, unless Christ come to me, and yet how to get him to come to me, I know not.

Would'st thou, O comfortless creature, have Christ to come to thee? Do then to Christ as *Lydia* did to *Paul*, lovingly invite him to come to thee. Make known thy comfortless condition to Christ, and then earnestly entreat him to visit thy poor soul. The ground why *I* exhort thee, O Sinner, thus to do; is, because God hath promised *to give his holy Spirit to them that ask it*, Luke 11.13. If therefore thou would'st have Christ by his Spirit to come to thee; invite him, ask him, beg

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and entreat him to come and dwell in thy ſoul; and tell him that he ſhall have every room in thy heart at command. As *Rebeckahs* brother ſaid to *Abraham*'s ſervant; So do thou ſay to Chriſt, *Come in thou bleſſed of the Lord, wherefore ſtandeſt thou without? for I have prepared the houſe, and roome for the Camels, &c.* Come in thou bleſſed of the Lord, wherefore ſtandeſt thou without? here is roome for thee and all thy glorious train. Here's an underſtanding, will, memory, affections; they ſhall be all at thy uſe and ſervice, O Chriſt; wherefore come in thou bleſſed of the Lord, and make thy abode with me. Thus continue crying to Chriſt, and longing for him, and by this thou wilt declare thy great love unto him, and ſo make thy ſelf capable of that ſweet Promiſe, which ſaith, *If a man love me, the Father loveth him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with*

him, John 14. 12. Then will thy condition be comfortable indeed when thou haſt got ſuch glorious Inmates as theſe to dwell with thee.

Having thus ſpoken what I thought fit to the wicked, by way of application from this point; wil now addreſs my ſelf to ſpeak unto the godly, and ſhew them how uſeful this point may be unto them. I ſhall firſt ſpeak to ſtrong men, and then unto Babes in Chriſt: to ſuch as can tell me that Chriſt as a Comforter is come to them. Secondly, to ſuch as can tell me they never yet found Chriſt as a Comforter come to them: and laſtly, to ſuch who can tell me that they have found Chriſt as a Comforter come to them, but now they have loſt him. To you that tell me you finde the truth of this doctrine by bleſſed experience, that Chriſt is come to you; I have only two things to ſay: Firſt this.

this, Make it ſure to thy ſelf that Chriſt indeed as a Comforter is come to thee, and that thy ſoul is not deluded in thy joy and conſolation. Secondly, ſtrive ſo to walk, that thy Comforter which is come to thee may never depart from thee. Firſt, ſtrive to make it ſure, that Chriſt indeed comes to thee: that the comfort which thou haſt is from the Comforter; to wit, the Spirit of Chriſt; and not from the ſpirit of deluſion.

There is great need that I ſhould preſs this inſtruction upon you, becauſe the ſpirit of deluſion is plentifully poured out in theſe latter dayes. The hypocrite hath his joy, and he judges that this his joy is the joy of the Holy Ghoſt, and as good as need to be: whereas it is a joy that ſhall periſh (ſaith the Scripture) a joy that will end in deſperate ſorrow. He thinks that Chriſt as a comforter is come to him: whereas 'tis only

the devil transformed into an Angel of light. And thus indeed are many thousands gulled and cheated in their comfort. Sadness would overshadow the smiling face of many a man, if he did but discern how groundless his joy and comfort is; and what a vain shadow in stead of a true substance, his poor soul is deluded withal. Wherefore my brethren, it concerns you that tell me, you are sensible that the comforter is come to you; to take pains to make it sure to your selves, that your souls are not deluded.

When the Spirit of God came upon *Saul* that he propheſied, the people that knew him before, said, *What is come to the ſonne of* Kiſh *? is Saul amongſt the Prophets?* Thus do thou say to thy ſoul, who art ſo merry and comfortable, *viz.* what is com. to thee, O my ſoul, that thou art now ſo joyful and chearful? Once *I* am ſure thou went'ſt mourning a l the day

day long: is Chriſt as a comforter come to thee? If Chriſt by his Spirit have brought glad tidings to thee, why then, O my glory, continue in thy mirth: but if not; why art thou ſo merry, O my ſoule? thy mirth is but madneſſe. As *David* queſtioned his ſoul for ſadneſſe, ſaying, *Why art thou ſo ſad, O my ſoule? and why art thou ſo caſt down within me?* So mayſt thou do well to queſtion thy mirth, ſaying; Why art thou ſo merry, O my ſoul? and why art thou much lifted up within me? is thy Comforter our Lord Jeſus Chriſt indeed come to thee? O then my glory, ceaſe not to declare thy comfort, by any comely poſture and geſture: but if not, a houſe of mourning, O my ſoul, is fitter for thee then a houſe of mirth; garments of ſackcloth and ſadneſs would better become thee, then garments of joy and gladneſs. You know how *Iſaac* once ſpake to his ſon, *Art thou,*

(said he) *my very son* Esau, Gen. 27. 24. So do thou humbly question thy comforter. Art thou my very comforter indeed? Art thou the *very Christ* the Son of God, which speakest consolation to my soul? you know how *John* questioned Christ much after this manner, that he might not be deceived concerning him, *Art thou he that should come, or do we not look for another*, Mat. 11. 3. So do thou say; Art thou he that should come and cómfort my soul, or should not *I* look for another? There be many false Christs and false comforters now in the world, and they deceive many: wherefore *I* beseech thee speak out, and speak plainly to my soul, whether thou be he that should comfort me, yea or not, that if *I* have obtained the true comforter, *I* may give God the glory of his great kindness; if not, *I* may seek out for another.

How should *I* know (may the strong

ſtrong man in Chriſt ſay to me, whether he that is come to my ſoul with conſolation; be he that ſhould come or not? How ſhould *I* be able to make it ſure to my ſoul, that the conſolation which *I* have is from the Spirit of Chriſt, and not from the ſpirit of deluſion.

To this I thus anſwer, if he that is come to thy ſoul be he that ſhould come, to wit, Chriſt; thou ſhalt find he doth more works then one in thy ſoul: he doth not only comfort thee, but he doth many great works beſides this. Chriſt doth many great works in a mans ſoul before he comforts him; and he doth many great works in his ſoul after he hath comforted him. Chriſt doth many great works in the ſoul of man before he comforts him; he doth break the heart before he binds it up: he firſt wounds the heart before he will heal it: He caſts down the ſoul for ſin, before he will raiſe it up.

Now to break the heart of man, which the Scripture compares to an *Adamant*, Zech. 7.12. for hardneſs is a great work; and yet this doth Chriſt throughly, before he comforts throughly. The breaking of the hard heart of man, hath many great works about it, ere it be effected, The convincing the ſoul of ſin, which ſelf-conceited man is not eaſily brought to the making of ſin out of meaſure ſinful in the ſouls apprehenſion, which blind man is not eaſily brought to ſee. The making of man to loath himſelf for the evils which he hath committed againſt God, which man full of ſelf-love is not eaſily wrought unto. The making of man to long for peace and reconciliation with God, as the greateſt happineſs in the world, and to beg this bleſſing with tears, as a ſoul that ſees he ſhall die and periſh eternally without it; which man that naturally hates God is not eaſily won

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unto. Yet all theſe difficult works doth Chriſt do in the ſoul of man, before he comes as a comforter to him. Which Chriſt confirms, where he ſaith; *Bleſſed are they that mourn, for they ſhall be comforted.*

Now, would ſt thou know whether he that is come to thy ſoul, be he that ſhould come or not? why then tell me? What did precede thy comfort which now thou haſt? did Chriſt leade thee to the Wells of conſolation by the waters of *Marah?* did he bring thee to ſow in tears, ere he gave thee to reap thy great harveſt of joy? Waſt thou ever in the Houſe of Mourning? Did the ſpirit of heavineſs for ſin ever take hold on thee? Was thy hard heart firſt broken, and after this bound up? Firſt wounded, and after this healed? Didſt thou go mourning for diſhonouring God all the day long? and after many dolorous days ſpent did thy comforter come to thee? ſure-

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y then he that is come, is he that ſhould come, and do not look for another: but if otherwiſe, thou haſt juſt cauſe to be jealous of thy joy.

Again, Chriſt as he doth great workes in the ſoule before he comforts it, ſo he doth great works in the ſoul after he hath comforted it. That ſoul which Chriſt comforts, he makes a very fuitfull ſoul in all grace to his glory. No waters make the ſoul of a Chriſtian grow in grace, like the waters of Conſolation. The comforting Spirit of Chrſt is in a Chriſtian in the ways of obedience, as wind and tide to a ſhip: that which makes him run the ways of Gods Commandments. That Chriſtian which is comforted by Chriſt, prays fervently, and prays frequently. Conſolation gives wings to ſupplication. That Chriſtian which is comforted by Chriſt, prays God with ſtrong affection. A ſoul comforted by Chriſt is as an inſtrument well tuned

ned by a skilful Muſician: he will, upon every occaſion make ſweet Melody in the eares of the Almighty. True conſolation is from Heaven, and it carries that ſoul ſtrongly to Heaven, in which it is. True conſolation is from Chriſt, and it will make a Chriſtian live wholly to Chriſt. To whom much is forgiven, they love much: and his love conſtrains them to deny themſelves, and to follow Chriſt unto death.

Would'ſt thou know then for certain, O ſtrong man in Chriſt! that he which is come to thy ſoul, is he which ſhould come? Why then look what activity is in thy ſoul to duty. Is thy ſoul as a Gyant refreſhed after wine, ſtrong and vigorous to the practice of all good duties? Art thou abundant in the work of the Lord? Art thou a ſweet Singer in *Iſrael*, of the

of the praiſes of the Lord? Is thy heart at thy mouth leaping within thee, like the Babe in *Elizabeths* Womb; when thou art telling what God hath done for thy ſoul? Art thou (in a word) a holy and heavenly man, as one comforted by a holy and heavenly God? Doth thy joy tranſcend the joys that this world affords in ſweetneſs? Doth it raiſe thy ſpirit to admire the love of God? and doth it make thee dead to ſecular delights? and to account naked carnal mirth madneſs? empty huſks for brutes to feed on? Then mayeſt thou comfortably conclude, that he which is come to thy ſoul, is he which ſhould come, and do not look for another: but if thou art merry and chearful, but not holy and heavenly, he that is come to thy ſoul, is not he that ſhould come; wherefore I beſeech thee to look for another.

A ſecond inſtruction which I would

would commend to ſtrong men in Chriſt, is this; after thou haſt made it ſure to thy ſoul, that Chriſt as a comforter is indeed come to thee, then ſtrive ſo to walk, that he may never depart from thee. So a man may walk, that Chriſt as a comforter may forſake his ſoul. *David* had woful experience of this truth, and ſo doubtleſs have many elſe of the godly. So a man may walk, that Chriſt as a comforter never depart from him. But how ſhall I thus walk, ſaith the comforted ſoul, that *I* might enjoy this Heaven below, till *I* come to that above, and ſo go from joy to joy; from joy unſpeakable and full of glory, to joy that cannot enter into any mortal heart to conceive of?

To this I thus anſwer, do not grieve Chriſt that is come to thee: Secondly, do all that thou canſt to delight him, if thou would'ſt have him continually abide with thee. Do not ſit down and reſt as one that had

hath a licence to be lazie, and as if all thy work were done, now thy comforter is come to thee: this will grieve him, and quickly make him leave thee. Thou hast obtained Christ to come a comforter to thee; well, yet let me tell thee as *Moses* did the *Israelites*; *Ye are not* (said he) *as yet come to the rest, and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you.* So say I to thee, O comforted soul! thou art not yet come to those degrees of consolation, which thou mayst attain unto in this life, if thou continue to be thrifty. The joy of the Holy Ghost is a bottomless Well, which thou canst never draw dry: and the more thou draweſt, the fresher and sweeter still shalt thou finde it. The joy of the Holy Ghost is no surfeting thing, as some earthly sweets are; and therefore thou mayst safely say, *Lord, evermore give me of this bread*; fill my soul with flagons of this precious liquour: let thy love

love be ſhed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghoſt: let my ſoul delight her ſelf in this fulneſs.

Secondly, now Chriſt as a comforter is come to thee, do not wax wanton againſt him, this alſo will grieve him, and make him quickly forſake thy ſoul as a comforter. Let all the manifeſtations of thy comfort be ſuitable to thy comforter: holy as he is holy: ſpiritual and heavenly as he is, *When ye are come into the good land, take heed that ye do not forget the Lord* (ſaid *Moſes* to *Iſrael*,) So I ſay to you that finde Chriſt with you as a comforter, which are come to the fellowſhip of the Spirit, and to the participation of that tranſcendent comfort which is by him; take heed that ye grow not giddy-headed, and forget God and your ſelves. The waters of Conſolation are ſtrong waters, and Mans weak head and heart cannot bear much of them ſteadily, but

but are ready to reel on one side or other. When the clouds of Heaven have well-watered the earth, then do weeds as well as good herbs spring apace; so when Christ by his Spirit, sweetly waters the soul with consolation, then levity and vanity, as well as christian mirth and chearfulness, spring amain: If a Christian be not very watchful over his soul, to pluck up such weeds by the roots, as soon as they begin to shew themselves. I conclude this thus: thou that art comforted by the Spirit, let not the manifestations of thy comfort grieve the Spirit. This remember that Satan hath an Art to bring evil out of the greatest good, as God hath an Art to bring good out of the greatest evil: and therefore beg that thou mayst not be ignorant of any of his devices, nor unable to resist them, if thou wouldst not lose thy Comforter.

Secondly, if thou would'st have thy

thy comforter to abide ſtill with thee; as thou muſt not grieve him, ſo thou muſt do all that thou canſt to delight him. Let be thy meat and drink to follow all the motions of the Spirit of Chriſt; whitherſoever Chriſt would have thee go, cheerfully obey him; this will delight thy comforter exceedingly, and make him to rejoyce to continue with thee. If Chriſt ſay unto thee as to the Fiſhermen, *Follow me*: do thou readily reply as the Scribe, *Maſter; I will follow thee whitherſoever thou goeſt*, Mat. 4: 19. Mat. 8. 19. This is to declare the genuine diſpoſition of Chriſts people, which Chriſt is exceedingly taken withal. Chriſts people are a willing people in their obedience, *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy Power.*

Secondly, humbly and compaſſionately tell diſconſolate ſouls, what Chriſt hath done for my ſoul: this will delight thy comforter much, and make

make him rejoyce to continue with thee. Chriſt delights to ſee his children communicative of the ſweet meats which he gives them. And therefore as *Jael* ſaid to *Barak*, ſo do thou, O comforted ſoul, to ſuch as go mourning all the day long: *come* (ſaid ſhe) *and I will ſhew thee the man whom thou ſeekeſt*, Judges 4.32. come, O ſad ſoul, that canſt not finde him whom thy ſoul loveth, *I* will ſhew thee the man whom thou ſeekeſt: the manner of his coming to my poor ſoul, and how long he made me wait upon him, ere he would come to me: and how well he hath now made me amends for all his ſtaying. And therefore, *Although thou ſayeſt thou ſhalt not ſee him, yet judgement is before him, therefore truſt thou in him*, Job 35.14. *For the viſion is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it ſhall ſpeak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry*, Hab. 2.3.

2. 3. The more imparting of experiments of love we are, to the glory of Christ: the more still will Christ graciously give us to our further comfort. And this indeed is Gods end in comforting some of his children, *that they may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith they themselves are comforted of God*: as the Apostle sweetly affirms.

Thirdly, thank Christ humbly and heartily for his coming to thee if thou wouldst have him abide still with thee. The *Israelites* when they came into the promised land which flowed with milk and honey, they were to take the first of all the fruits of the earth, and put them in a basket, and so present them to the Priest, saying, *viz. And now behold I have brought the first-fruits of the land which thou the Lord hast given me*, Deut. 26. Thus were they to set their first-fruits before the Lord, and to worship before him, as you may see at large.

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Why, you that enjoy Christ as a comforter, you have received the first-fruits of that good Land which *Canaan* typified, which flows with milk and honey. Bring therefore these first-fruits, and set them before God, and worship: bring the sweet comforts of the Holy Ghost in your hearts before the Lord, and say, Behold, O Christ, these and these are the sweet consolations of thy Spirit: and lo, for them all *I* humbly render praise to thy Name. Such mighty enemies of my peace hast thou conquered; such doubts which so long troubled me, hast thou answered: such wants which so long time kept me exceeding low, hast thou supplied; to thee, O God, be the glory of thine own goodness.

You have great cause thus to magnifie the Lord for his mercy, which find Christ as a comforter come to you: you enjoy that blessing which exceedeth all outward blessings. The light

light of Gods Countenance lifted up, upon a poor mourning ſoul; 'tis of greater value then corn, wine, oyle; then coral, rubies, or any choice thing that this world can afford. The naked revelation of Chriſt in the ſoul of man, is of more wealth then all theſe, ſaith *Solomon*; the moſt glorious revelation of Chriſt then to the ſoul, which the ſoul of man is capable of in this life; muſt needs be of much more tranſcendent worth. You enjoy that bleſſing which exceedeth many inward bleſſings. It exceedeth knowledge, for what is Knowledge in the head, to the Joy of the Holy Ghoſt in the heart? One beam of light in the underſtanding, is of more worth then all the Silver and Gold, Gems, and Jewels in the World; and yet one beam of the light of Gods countenance ſhining upon the heart, though but by reflexion from the face of Jeſus Chriſt is of more worth then all knowledg

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knowledge which humane ſtudy can attain unto. I cannot ſay that this bleſſing, exceedeth the leaſt ſaving grace in the ſoul: but this I can ſafely ſay, that conſolation, 'tis the gloſs and glory of every grace; every grace ſhines in its full luſtre where the comforter dwells. This I can further ſay, that you enjoy that bleſſing which makes Heaven a Heaven, and which makes Earth a Heaven to you: and therefore you have great reaſon to magnifie the Lord for his mercy. The more of Heaven we enjoy upon Earth, the more ſhould we ſet our ſelves to do the work of them which are in Heaven, whilſt on Earth.

Fourthly, finally let Chriſts mediate coming to thee by his Spirit, make thee long earneſtly for his immediate coming to thee in his own perſon; this delights Chriſt, that his Spouſe ſhould ſay, *Come*, Rev. 22.17, as the Spirit doth, that ſhe ſhould long

long for the wedding day, as he doth. When good old *Simeon* had imbraced the Conſolation of *Iſrael*, for which he ſo long waited, he then deſired preſently to be diſſolved: ſo thou that haſt imbraced the Conſolation of *Iſrael*, ſhouldſt in holy manner with *Simeon*, *Iob*, and *Paul*, deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all. You whom Chriſt hath kiſſed with the kiſſes of his lips, ſhould long earneſtly to lie between his breaſts all night; my meaning is, to have a full enjoyment of Chriſt. Thus have I done ſpeaking to ſuch, who can tell me that Chriſt as a Comforter is come to them.

In the next place I addreſs my ſelf to ſpeak to ſuch of the godly, who can tell me that they never yet found Chriſt as a comforter come to them. Two or three things I have to ſay to you from this ſweet doctrine.

First, I would have you to labour to believe this doctrine, that Christ *will not leave you comfortless, but will certainely* (at last) *come to you.* Christ hath repeated his promise, which is as a bond with many seales; and therefore thou hast just ground to beleeve, O comfortless soule! that Christ *willnot leave thee comfortless, but will come to thee.*

Object. What just ground have I to beleeve, that Christ will come to me, seeing he is holy, and I am unholy: hee is glorious in holyness, and I am abominable in sin and wickedness, saith the weake comfortless soule.

Sol. Art thou more vile then *Manasseh?* Christ came to him and comforted him. Art thou more muddy and earthly then *Zacheus?* Christ came to him and comforted him. Art thou more deviliſh then *Mary magdalen*, out of whom were cast seven devils? Christ came to her, and filled her

her, ſoule with ſtrong Conſolation. Why ſhou ld'ſt not thou beleeve that Chriſt will come to thee too, and quiet and comfort thy mourning ſpirit?

Sol. But ſecondly I anſwer thus. *viz* Chriſt doth not ſo much look how thou art qualified, as at what he hath promiſed: Chriſt hath promiſed he will come to thee, and he is faithfull and will do it. If my ſoule were never ſo poore, never ſo blinde, never ſo wretched, never ſo naked; yet Chriſt having promiſed to come to thee he will make good his word; though he come backward with a mantle to cover thy nakedneſs, as *Shem* and *Iaphet* did to *Noah*. If thy ſoule were full of wounds; if thy ſoul were full of running putrifying ſores, if thou wert as black with ſin as an *Ethyopian*; if thou wert as ſpotted with ſin as a Leopard; nay, if thy ſoule did ſtinke within

thee, as *Lazarus* after taken out of the earth again: yet Christ having promised to come to thee and comfort thee; he will do it, though he hold his nose while he be comforting thy stinking nasty soul. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not a jot or tittle of Christs promise shall faile. *The voice of my Beloved, behold, he cometh leaping upon the Mountaines, and skipping upon the Hills.* Cant. 2. 8. Though there be Mountaines and Hills of sin in thy soul, rather then thou shalt be left comfortless.

Wherefore, O Weak comfortless soul, say not of thy Saviour and Comforter, as *Balaam* did, *I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh.* Num. 24. 17 I shall see Christ come with a witnesse; nay with many thousand witnesses at the great day, when *every eye shall see him*; But I shall not see him come to me now, in this soul-dolour as a comforter, I shall behold him peradventure, as *Moses* beheld

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the Holy Land, afarre off: he will never come nigh my poor ſoul, to ſtay it with thoſe comforts which it needs. Ceaſe, O weak ſoul, this incredulous language; and ſtrive to beleeve, and this ſweet promiſe I treat of ſhall be made good unto thee. No ſin ſo mighty to keep thy Comforter from thee, as unbelief. Say then, O mourning Chriſtian, to thy comfortleſs ſoul; *Yet a little while and he that ſhall come will come, and will not tarrie.* Heb. 10. 37. He that hath ſaid he will come as a comforter to thee, will come and will ſatisfy thy ſoul with conſolation, as with marrow and fatneſs. Say to thy ſad ſoul, with the Pſalmiſt. *My God will come, and will not keepe ſilence:* He will ſpeake Conſolation ſo plainly, that my ignorant ſoul ſhall underſtand, ſo powerfully, that my incredulous ſoul ſhall beleeve, and own her own mercies. Thou art now toſſed and almoſt drowned, C

ny ſoul, with reſtleſs ways of miſery; but the Spirit will move upon theſe waters; thou ſhalt ſee Chriſt comming towards thee, upon theſe troubleſome ways anon, and ſay, *be not afraid, it is I: I* that have loved thee, and given my ſelf for thee, and none ſhall pluck thee out of my hand.

Secondly, as I would have thee to itiive firmly to beleeve this truth; ſo I would have thee endeavour patiently to wait the accompliſhment of it. Beleeve that Chriſt will come to thee, and wait patiently untill he do come. There is good ground why every ſoul ſhould patiently wait for Chriſt, comming to him, whether we conſider our ſelves which are to be viſited, or Chriſt our viſitour. If thou, O comfortleſs ſoul, conſider thy ſelf which art to be viſited; there is great reaſon thou ſhouldeſt wait patiently till Chriſt come to thee, how long ſoever he ſtay.

Firſt, thou art a Creature and

Chriſt

Christ is thy Creatour; and should not a Creature wait on his Creatour? Thou art a servant, and Christ is thy Lord: and should not a servant wait on his Lord? Consider thee in thy highest relations, and they all call for waiting. Thou art Son, and Christ is thy Father: and should not a Son wait on his Father? Thou art a Wife, and Christ is thy Husband: and should not a Wife wait on her Husband?

Secondly, consider that thou hast deserved, that Christ should never come to thee, and yet for all this, seeing he will come to the, hast not thou just cause to wait patienly till he do come, how long soever it be first? Before thy calling thou didst reject Christ: and since thy calling, thou hast often grieved that Christ; and hast not thou then deserved that Christ should never come to thee? Thou hast quenched

many a ſweet motion of the Spirit of Chriſt: thou haſt turned the deaf ear the ſweet ſtill voice that hath ſpoken behind thee, times without number, and ſo ſlighted the Spirit of Chriſt; and haſt not thou then juſtly deſerved, that Chriſt as a Comforter ſhould never come to thee? yet ſeeing he will come, for all this unkindneſs, haſt not thou juſt cauſe to wait patiently for him, how long ſo ever he ſtay? thou haſt many weekes many months, nay, many yeeres, gone along in a courſe of grieving Chriſt; and doeſt thou think much of waitting a few weeks, a few months, a few years, for Chriſt to come to comfort thee?

Take this in another form: thou didſt make Chriſt wait a long time upon thee, ere thou wouldſt let him abide with thee as a ſpirit of Reformation; and is there not juſt cauſe then, that thou ſhould'ſt wait patiently a long time upon him, if he will

will have it so, ere he abide with thee as a Spirit of Consolation: how many knocks did Christ give at thy stubborn heart ere thou wouldst ope to him? how much dew of the night distilled upon his locks, ere thou wouldst give him house-room in thy heart? how many mercies? how many corrections were all spilt upon thee, ere Christ could win thee to respect him? canst thou tell? if thou canst not, think not much if Christ make thee shed a few tears, and breath out a few groans, ere he bring glad tidings of Peace unto thee.

Secondly, if thou consider Christ thy visitour, there is all the reason that can be, that thou shouldest wait patiently till he come to thee. Christ will certainly come to thee. Christ will come to thee at the fittest time; Christ will come richly when he doth come, which are all special grounds of patience. Christ will come to thee, O comfortless soul.

hough it may ſeeme to thee, omething long firſt. Thou doeſt not wait for one that will not come at all, as the *Turk* waiteth for *Mahomet*: nay, thou doeſt not waite for one that will frivolouſly delay the time of his coming. Thou doeſt not wait for one that will deceive thee. Chriſt hath promiſed to come to thee, and he is faithful and cannot deny himſelfe. There is two things in faithfulneſs: firſt, that a man ſhould own what he hath ſaid; and then ſecondly, that he ſhould make it good. Now both theſe will Chriſt do: Chriſt will not eate his words, as we ſay: what he hath promiſed he will confeſs, and will make good; whatſoever labour or loſs he be at to doe it. Chriſt is not mutable as we are, to promiſe one thing to day, and recal it again to morrow: *hee is immutable and changeth not, therefore we are not conſumed.*

Thou doeſt not waite for one that

that will frivolously delay the time of his coming. Christ will not deale with thy comfortless soule, as those sorry guests dealt with Christ, makes excuses; one had bought a yoke of oxen, and therefore could not come: another a farme &c. Christ will not tell thee as *Abraham Dives* in hell, betweene thy soule and him is a great gulfe, so that there can be be no entercourse betweene them; Nor that from heaven to earth, is too long a journey for him to make: He will not tell thee, that the place where thy sick comfortless soule lies, is filthy, and altogether unfit for him to come to: He will not tell thee that thy soul is so farre gone in griefe and desperate sorrow, that it is in vaine for him to come to thee. Christ puts none of these delayes upon any of his patients.

No

No, the ground why Christ ſtayes is, that he may come to thee at the fiteſt time; and then he will come with healing in his wings, if all the devils in hell ſhould oppoſe him, which mee thinks ſhould be a ſatisfactorie ground of patience, to any diſconſolate ſoule: If a phyſitian yet apply this, and that, further evacuation, rather then cordials: as knowing the body, not yet fit for cordials: will not any wiſe man ſubmit patiently to his way? ſo if Chriſt forbeare giving thy ſicke ſoule cordials, as he that well knowes thy ſoule not fit yet; for ſuch luſcious things, wilt not thou with much thankfulneſs acknowledge his great care over thy ſoule, and with all patience wait his leaſure? I patiently undergoe the pain of drawing plaiſters, when I know my ſore is not fit for healing; thus ſhould it be in ſpiritual diſtreſſes: we ſhould patiently undergoe griefe and ſorrow until our ſoules be

fit

fit for conſolation, and then we ſhall be ſure to have it.

Finally, be ſure of this, O mourning ſoul; that Chriſt will come richly, when hee doth come; and therfore me thinks thou ſhould'ſt wait patiently for him: what Merchant but would wait patiently, the returne of his ſhip in the longeſt voyage, if he were ſure that it would richly return at laſt. Chriſt will come very richly furniſh'd with the comforts of the holy Ghoſt, which are unſpeakable and glorious to your ſoules that mourn after him, and wait for him, what the Apoſtle once ſpake of himſelfe in relation to the *Romanes*; that may I truely ſay of Chriſt, in relation to all that mourn after him: *& I am ſure that when I come unto you, I ſhall come* (ſaith he) *in the fulneſſe of the bleſſing of the Goſpel of Chriſt* Rom. 15. 29. Chriſt, I am ſure, O mourning ſoule, when he doth come unto thee, he will come in the fulneſs of the bleſſing of the Holy

Holy Ghost: thou shalt have Joy in the Holy Ghost unspeakable and glorious. Thou by long waiting art made a more vast vessel, to hold the precious waters of consolation; and Christ by long staying, doth (as *I* may say) the more furnish himselfe with these waters of life, to refresh, fill, and satisfie thy thirsty soule, when he comes to thee. Christ will heale throughly thy broken heart, and binde up all thy wounds: he will answer all thy doubts, and cleare all thy scruples: he will quiet thy quarrelling conscience, and still thy complaining spirit: he will fill thy sad soule with joy and gladness, and thy dejected spirit with songs of thanksgiveing.

If these things, O mourning soul, will not make thee wait patiently, til thy comforter come to thee, but thou wilt murmure and repine, and fall upon indirect waies to get consolation; know, that by this practise thou

thou wilt make thy condition more miſerable, then at preſent it is; Thou wilt griev him that ſhould come as a Comforter to thee; & if thou by thy ſin make Chriſt grieve, how can Chriſt by his Spirit make thee rejoyce? and if thou ſet him a mourning that can only comfort thee, by whom wilt thou be comforted? Doſt thou thinke to winne Chriſt to thee, by a dogged diſpoſition? Chriſt may pitty, and cure thy humors, but 'twill never be by conſolation. Hee will bring thee to be lowly and meeke ere thou ſhalt finde reſt to thy ſoule: hee will make thee willing to lie under his feet, glad of crums of comfort, and willing to waite for them till Chriſt hath dined, and every child ſerved.

If thy corrupt ſoule hanker after the pleaſures of ſin againe, becauſe Chriſt as a comforter doth not come to thee, and thou be reſolved to pick and chuſe, amongſt the ſins thy ſoul knows

knows, to finde out one that thy ſoule moſt loves, to make a comforter to thee as the *Iſraelites* in their dogged humour made them a captaine to returne to *Ægipt* ag ine; know this, that what ſin thou pitcheſt upon to make a Comforter, that ſin will Chriſt make a devil to torture thee: Chriſt will make thee know by wofull experience, that the ſweeteſt ſin is a bitter and miſerable comforter: that the leaſt ſinne, is too great an evill, truly to comfort the ſoule: that to go to the devill for conſolation, is to make faſter haſte for comfort, then good ſpeed: that neither ſin, nor any thing in the world beſide ſin ſhall comfort thy ſoule; when he himſelfe will not.

3. The laſt inſtruction that I have to commend to thee, O comfortleſſe ſoule! that did'ſt never yet finde Chriſt as a comforter come to thee is this: obſerve how Chriſt comes,

and

and do not put him off Christ comes to comfortlesse souls with comfort, in a promise; as I have at large shew'd you. The promise, Christ opens before the soule, that he may see the blessing wrapt up in it, which he needs. and then often repeats it to the soule, that he may relie upon it: instances to illustrate this way of Christ, I have given you; things must not be here againe repeated, that which here I would press by way of Application, is, that you which are comfortlesse soules, would preserve this secret way of the Comforter, and meet him. Art thou tempted? and dost thou now heare a sweet still voice, as it were behind thee, saying, *My grace shall be sufficient for thee?* why this is the voice of thy beloved, that is come to thee, embrace what he saith, rest upon it, turn

'Tis with many Christians in their minority as it was with *Samuel*; they doe not know the voice of the Lord, speaking in the promise and therefore I thought good to note this last instruction.

not

not thy Comforter away now, by unbeliefe: and peevish pettish humours. Hast fallen into sin, by the strength of temptation, and thine owne corruption? and dost thou heare such a sweet voice behinde thee as this. *The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sinne?* 1 *John* 1.7. why this is the Language of thy beloved, he is come to comfort thee, O mourning soule, doe not thrust him away by unkinc language of unbelief and passion. Heare what he saith, for it is sweet: strive to believe what he saith, for it is sure. As *Isaac* said unto *Iacob* his sonne, after he had had some discourse at a distance with him, *come neer now and kisse me my son*, Gen. 27. 29. So should such comfortless souls, say to Christ when they hear Christ speaking, as it were at a distance, softly and coldly to them, the sweet and melodious promises of his word, come neerer now, O my beloved,

and

and kiſſe me with theſe kiſſes of thy lips, for thy love is better then wine: what thou ſaieſt to my ſoule, ſay it with ſuch life, that my heart may no longer be faithleſſe, but believe, and give glory to thee. I have now done ſpeaking to you, who never yet had the Comforter come to you.

I come now in the laſt place to ſpeake a word or two particularly, to ſuch of Gods people, who can tell me they have found Chriſt as a Comforter come to them, but now have loſt Him. Three things *I* have to ſay to theſe. Firſt, labour to be ſenſible of thy loſs. Secondly, blame not Chriſt for departing from thee, Thirdly, uſe all holy meanes to get him to returne to thee againe. Firſt, *I* would have thee, O deſerted ſoule! to labor to be truely ſenſible of thy loſs. Though it be that ſome are deeply ſenſible of this great loſs; yet others are as deeply ſtupid, which moves me to note this inſtruction.

For

For a man to be ſtupid and ſenſeleſs under corporal afflictions, argues a verie ill temper of ſpirit; but for a man to be ſtupid and ſenſeleſs under ſpiritual afflictions, under ſuch a ſpiritual affliction, as this; the loſs of the Sonne. The loſs of Chriſt as a Comforter, argues a very ill temper of ſpirit indeed. Strive therefore, O deſerted ſtupid ſoule! to affect thine heart throughly with thy loſs. Thou haſt loſt more then *Job*: when he had loſt children, ſubſtance, health, honours, and friends: nay thou haſt loſt more, then if thou hadſt loſt this world; Nay thou haſt loſt more then if thou hadſt loſt thy life, which is of more worth then the world: thou haſt loſt Chriſt, which is richer then this world, and ſweeter then thy life. What an infinite loſs were it to this world to loſe the Sun? 'twere at once to loſe all: *Pereunte ſole, pereunt omnia*; for all things ſerviceable for the uſ

of

of man, depend upon the motion and influence of that glorious Bodie. What a loſs then is it to the leſſer world. to loſe Chriſt the Sonne of Righteouſneſs? Tis to loſe all good at once for ſoule, and body. All graces cloſe and wither when Chriſt departs; as all fragrant flowers when the Sunne withdrawes his influence. And when theſe flowers witherin the ſoule, a man is a moving dunghil, that ſtinkes in the noſtrils of God and man, where ever he comes. A man that hath loſt Chriſt, may truely ſay as ſhe when the Arke was loſt, *that his glary is departed*. As the Sunne is the glorie of the greater world, ſo Chriſt the Sunne of Righteouſneſs, is the glorie of the leſſer World, to wit, man.

Thou haſt loſt that in the world, that is the world, that is more worth then the world, and which all the world can never help thee to.

Thou

Thou haſt loſt that which would have made the worſt condition in this life, a Heaven; whereas the beſt without it, is but a hell. Thou haſt loſt that which would have beene to thy ſoule a continual feaſt; whereas now thy ſoule is a continual famine and leanneſs. Thou haſt loſt thy ſpirits, and thy ſoule is in a dead palſie, ſo that thou art a liveing dead man, fit for no ſpiritual ſervice. Thou haſt loſt thy head, thou haſt loſt thy eyes, thou haſt loſt thy hands, thou haſt loſt thy clothing, nay, thou haſt loſt thy beſt father, thy beſt husband, thy beſt friend; all this and much more comfort is Chriſt to man. Thou haſt great reaſon then, O deſerted ſoul, to lay to heart thy loſſe.

Lay to heart thy loſs, this is comely, but doe not blame Chriſt for departing from thee, this is uncomely, and unrighteous. Uncomely; for it doth not ſuit with wiſedomes

children, to lay folly to their maker. Unrighteous, for thou conſtrain'ſt him to depart from thee, otherwiſe he had never left thee: thou did'ſt ſinne againe and againe of weakneſs, and yet Chriſt as a Comforter did not depart from thee, untill thou beganſt to take *pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs*, and to make ſin a a cuſtome, *a right eye*, a very ſerviceable thing unto thee, Chriſt did not leave thee. Thou beganſt to wax wanton againſt Chriſt, and then Chriſt caſt thee off. Thou beganſt to play the Apoſtate, and to backſlide in heart from Chriſt: and then thou felſt off from Chriſt; and then he fell off from thee, *and filled thee with thine own ways.* Now theſe things ſeriouſly conſidered, haſt thou any cauſe to blame Chriſt for departing from thee? It is a comely and a very righteous thing for Wiſdomes children to juſtifie Wiſdom in all his ways, as to others, ſo to our ſelves.

Where-

Wherefore thus do, O deserted soul; say, righteous art thou, O Christ, in departing from me, and righteous mayst thou be, if thou never return to me, so unkindly have I dealt with thee.

Then set thy self seriously to the use of all holy meanes, whereby thou maist get thy Comforter to returne to thee. Examine thy soul throughly thou must, to find out what evill deprived thee of so great a good; and in serious soul-searching, God will speak to thy conscience, and conscience will speak plainly to thee, and tell thee wherein thou didst give distaste to thy Comforter, and what was the cause he forsooke thy soul.

And when thou hast found out that evill, which conscience tels thee deprived thee of so great a good, thou must fall very foul with it, how sweet soever it hath been unto thee. Thy great work must be, to bring thy heart to a holy *revenge* upon this sin: to abhorre it, and thy self, be-

cause

cauſe of it: and to become very vile, as *Iob* ſaith, and very low in thine owne eyes. Bring thy heart to admire the infinite patience and mercy of God, that things are no worſe with thy ſoul. That God had not cut thee off in the acting of that ſin for which he deſerted thee: that he hath left any place for repentance, and given the leaſt deſire to ſet about this work.

And when thou art come thus far, poſſibly the light of Gods countenance may begin now and then to glance into thy ſoul, as at ſome little cranny: or at leaſt ſome more then ordinary lightſomneſs may appear in thy dark dull ſoule, as there doth in the dark morning, ſome ſpace of time before the Sun appears, that had left this Horizon. Now this beam of light, or this litle lightſomneſs of ſoul, thou muſt much admire; and acknowledg an unfathomed depth of love in it; that God ſhould ſo much as once

ſtoop to caſt an eye after thee more, to give thy ſoule the leaſt refreſhing, that did abuſe flagons of love.

By this glimpſe of light, or glimmering light, you are to ſtrengthen your faith, in the belief of this, that light will more and more appeare, as the light of the morning unto the perfect day: and ſo conſequently to follow God with ſo much the more fervency of praier, for the return of his wonted *kindneſs*. *Joſeph*, you know, carried himſelf very roughly to his brethren which had abuſed him, for ſome ſpace of time; and put them in great fear of the loſs of their lives; told them they were *Spies*, and many harſh words he gave them, and harſh looks: but at laſt when his brethren had brought him to *Benjamin*, and diſcourſed a while, *Joſephs* bowels began to work, and he could no longer with-hold his brotherly love, *Come neare to me I pray you, I*

am Joseph your brother, &c. Thus Christ our elder brother deales with us, who do unkindly and unbrotherly use him: he will handle us very roughly, and put us in feare of the loss of our best lives. he will make our consciences speak bitter things against us; and let loose the devil to tell us that we are *Spies*, hypocrites, and false friends to Christ: in this distracted, affrighted, perplexed state, he may hold us many dayes, many weeks, many moneths; but he cannot hold in his brotherly love alwayes if we patiently bear his frownes, and kindly intreat him, and bring *Benjamin* to him, his own blood and merits this will make his bowels work; and make him unmask himself and say, come neare to me, O mourning souls, forsaken and not comforted; I am Christ your elder Brother, whom ye unkindly used: in a little wrath I hid my face from you, but now with everlasting kindness will I embrace you.

CHRISTS COMMUNION With his Church Militant.

2 Tim. 4. vers. 22.

The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy Spirit.

THis Text is *Pauls* sweet affectionate farewel to *Timothy*. Many grave and gracious instructions *Paul* had given to *Timothy*; but 'tis not much what man saith to the eare, as what Christ saith to the heart, that works effectually, to set man about his duty; and therefore doth *Paul* in the conclusion

of all his Chriſtian counſel to *Timothy*, pathetically pray, *That the Lord Jeſus Chriſt would be with his ſpirit.*

The beſt teaching of man is but as water ſpilt upon the ground, unleſs Chriſt inwardly teach the ſpirit. If I am taught my duty by a *Paul*, one in gifts not inferior to the chiefeſt Apoſtles, yet unleſs Chriſt be with my ſpirit, to make things take root there, all will die and wither, like good ſeed caſt into bad ground. And therefore *Paul* ſaw it but needful as to teach the eare, ſo to intreat the Lord to teach and ſtrengthen the ſpirit. *The Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with thy Spirit.*

There is a great diſtance (you know) between the eare and the heart: it is an eaſie thing for man to bring home things unto the one, but no leſs then the almighty power of Chriſt will bring home things unto the other. There is an incomparable hardneſs upon the heart of man

naturally: it is harder then an *Adamant*: now though a child with his little finger, may make a dint upon the bough, yet a Gyant with all his strength, cannot make dints upon an *Adamant*; much less can all created strength, make divine impressions upon the spirit of man; and therefore it is, that *Paul* doth implore an Almighty strength to do thus, *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy Spirit.*

Why doth not *Paul* here, wish riches and honours and pleasures unto *Timothy*? Is the bare presence of Christ with a mans spirit such a blessing? To this I answer, riches and honours, &c. They are *bona*, but not *optima*: good things, but not the best things. Earthly things though good in themselves, yet are no further good to me, then as the Lord Jesus Christ is with my spirit, to guide it to use them; and therefore *Paul* as one truly wise, prayed for the prime good for *Timothy*; for that good which

which all other things work together good, to wit, *That to have the Lord Iesus Christ with our spirits, is a prime and principal blessing.* Paul here wisheth it to *Timothy*, as a cardinal blessing, *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit.*

Enucleatio propositionis.

To have Christ with our spirits, &c. How can Christ be present with a man upon earth, who is now ascended, and sitteth at the right hand of his Father in heaven?

The Apostle doth hint an answer to this question, in the form of his prayer, if you observe it. *The Lord Jesus Christ, saith he, be with thy spirit.* He speaks of such a presence, as will fitly yeeld Communion and fellowship to the spirit of man. There is a double presence of Christ with man, corporal and spiritual, joyntly; or meerly spiritual. With just men made perfect in glory, Christ

Christ is corporally present; they behold his wounded body made a glorious body, as a continual assurance of the resurrection of their own vile bodies unto the same similitude. And with them Christ is present spiritually, filling them with those joyes, the tast of which upon earth, is called *unspeakable and full of glory.* Of this communion speaks Christ himself, *I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.* Joh. 17. 23. As the soul is *tota in toto, & tota in qualibet parte*: according to the whole, in that whole which is less noble then it self: according to the whole, that is, according to that full force and energy which the soul hath, it actuates and organizeth every member of the body, the least as well as the greatest; So Christ in the mystical body of Saints glorified, is as I may say, *Totus in toto, & totus in qualibet parte.* Whole Christ doth wholly exercise dominion in every

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glorified ſoul; hence it is, that all ſuch ſouls, are wholly holy, and wholly happy; that is, perfectly holy, and perfectly happy: for as much as Chriſt, who is in the fulneſs of his Fathers glory is fully preſent with them.

Secondly, there is a preſence of Chriſt with man, meerly ſpiritual; that is, ſuch a preſence, as whereby not the perſon, but the providence of Chriſt may be ſeen; ſuch a preſence as *ſuperiora* have with *inferiora*, not a *contigual*, but a *verinal* preſence; a preſence of influence and governance, as the Sun hath with us, by his rayes and beames. And this preſence is either *Commune* or *Special.*

The Commune preſence of Chriſt with man, is that whereby man is upheld and guided, according to the being of a rational creature. Of this preſence of Chriſt with man ſpeaks the Apoſtle, *that they ſhould*

seek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him and find him, though he be not farr from every one of us, for in him we live, move, and have our being. Acts 17. 27, 28. Christ as an upholder of each creature, is not farr from every one of us: that is, he is still present with us thus, and *with all nations of men, which he hath made of one blood, to dwell upon the face of the earth.* This presence of Christ with man therefore, cannot properly be called a *Prime* and *principal blessing*, a choise and favour, because it is commune to mankind in general; yea, Commune to all creatures below man; for God is with all the works of his hands, to uphold every creatur according to its proper species.

Secondly, there is a sp cial presence of Christ with man, which is that efficacious working of the Spirit of Christ, in the spirit of man, whereby it is made one spirit, with the Spirit of Christ, in willing and nil-

ling, according to that of the Apostle, *He that is joyned to the Lord in one Spirit.*

There is a special presence of Christ, with the bodys of men, for the good of them: which the *Psalmist* intimates where he saith, *That he knows our frame, and remembers that we are but dust: and that the Angels of the Lord pitch their tents about the righteous.* And *Jacob* found the truth of this by experience, when he fled before *Esau*, and slept so sweetly upon a stone. But this tender and special presence and providence of Christ, respecting the outward man, is comprehended under the other, which respects the inward man, as *quid minus sub majori*, a less blessing under a greater. For if God be in a special manner present with my spirit, to guide and order that unto all Holy wayes, my spirit will command my body to walk in them too: and so consequently

Christ

Christ cannot chuse, but be tenderly present with me also, for the good of that, whilst every member thereof, is actuated by a spirit of his own ordering, to his own honour, *as weapons of righteousness.* And therefore doth *Paul* (pithily to speak much in few) silently pass over that, which is necessarily presupposed; praying that Christ would be with *Timothies* spirit, and then he was sure, Christ would be after a special manner present, with his body too, for the good of that. *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit,* That is, *The Lord Iesus Christ exercise a special dominion in thy spirit, for the guiding and ordering of it unto the avoiding of evil, and to the performing of all good, whereby Christ may have all the glory due to his Name.*

Now that thus to have Christ present with a mans spirit, is a prime and principal blessing; I will plainly demonstrate to you by a triple argument *ab effectu.* Thus

Thus to have Chriſt preſent with our ſpirits, is the ready way to all temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal good: and therefore muſt needs be a prime and principal bleſſing.

Thus to have Chriſt preſent with a mans ſpirit, is the ready way unto all temporal good. Men whoſe ſpirits Chriſt doth after a ſpecial manner order, to avoid ſin, and to *keep themſelves pure*, as *Paul* here uſeth the expreſſion to *Timothy*, all temporal good things, ſo farr forth as may be good for them, belong unto them by promiſe: *For godlineſs hath the promiſe of this life. It ſhall come to paſs* (ſaith the Lord) *if you walk in my wayes, that I will bleſs you in the fruit of the womb, in the fruit of the field, in the baſket and ſtore, &c. If you walk in my wayes I will do this, &c.* Why, they with thoſe ſpirits Chriſt is after a ſpecial manner preſent, this is their high-way (as *Solomon* ſaith) *to depart from evil.*

evill: that is; this is their daily endeavour, to walk in all the wayes of the Lord; and so consequently, all temporal good of right belongs unto them.

But you will say, how is it then, that those with whose spirits Christ is most present to make most tender for his honour, have usually least of all temporal good things.

To this the answer is easie and manifold. Men with whose spirits Christ is most present, to make them most tender to avoid sin, and to keep themselves pure, these the devil doth most of all maligne, and sets his limmes to *spoile them of their goods*, as the Author to the *Hebrews* saith, to keep them from that, which Christ would have them advanced to; or else strip them of that, which Christ hath conferred on them, by imprisonment, banishment and the like; and so make such live in dens and holes, and

and caves of the earth; to wander in deſerts and wil'erneſſes, wearing ſheep-skinnes, and goat-skinns, whom the world is not worthy. Where a ſpirit of malice and confuſion rules 'tis no marvel to ſee ſervants ſet on horſe-back, and the princes go on foot.

Secondly, men with whoſe ſpirit Chriſt is after a ſpecial manner preſent, he takes ſpecial notice to what evill the ſpirit is moſt inclined, and ſo anſwerably gives of theſe outward things unto them. A wiſe Father hath his eye upon the diſpoſition of his child, and to what exorbitancy he finds him inclined, he labours to prevent all occaſions to it, and ſo keeps his child ſhort of what he could otherwiſe liberally allow him. And thus 'tis with our heavenly Father, reſpecting his children: he eyes ſtrictly their ſpirits, and if he ſee them inclined to pride, coveto uſneſs, or any other ſcandalous vice, he

he ſhortens them in that, which may foment theſe. At theſe (I think) *Iames* may point, where he ſaith, *Let the rich rejoyce in that he is made low.* Iam. 1. 10. God out of tender love to his children, oft-times makes them poore in purſe, that they may become poore in ſpirit, and ſo capable of the kingdom of heaven. Which rightly weighed, is not matter of ſorrow, but matter of joy, as *Iames* ſaith.

Thirdly, thoſe with whoſe ſpirits Chriſt is after a ſpecial manner preſent, to guide them to walk in his wayes, and to keep themſelves pure; Chriſt doth prove them by poverty, as by other things: and hence it may come to paſs; that Chriſtians very holy, may yet notwithſtanding be very deſtitute of the things of this life. Thus you know the Lord dealt with *Iob.* Chriſt was after a ſpecial manner preſent with his ſpirit, to guide him to walk uprightly above

many

many in his time. Now to make known this to the world, to his own glory, and *Iobs* eternal honour, he ſtript *Iob* of all, and ſet him upon a dunghil, who before ſat with the chiefeſt in ſeats of honour. God will have the world know, that thoſe with whoſe ſpirits he is after a ſpecial manner preſent, to guide and order them, are not as thoſe with whoſe ſpirits the divel is in a ſpecial manner preſent, to guide and order; to wit, ſuch as will wind and turn every way when put to it.

Laſtly, thoſe with whoſe ſpirits Chriſt is after a ſpecial manner preſent, they deſire but little of the things of this life; and therefore 'tis no marvel, to ſee Chriſtians very holy, yet not very wealthy. Chriſtians with whoſe ſpirit Chriſt is after a ſpecial manner preſent, they only deſire daily bread; *Agurs* portion, food convenient; and this the Lord gives them, and with this they are contented,

contented, which is the only wealthy estate, Christians, with whose spirits Christ is after a special manner present *they hunger and thirst after Righteousnes*, not after riches in the world: they *covet the best gifts*, the unsearchable riches of Christ, and not the fading riches of this life. Now Christ applies himself, to be most liberall in the distribution of that, which the spirits of men most bend after; in mercy, or in justice, Christians whose spirits most strongly bend after grace; to these Christ in mercy doth most bountifully apply himself, to give grace: according to that of Christ, *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousnes, for they shall be filled.* Christians whose spirits most strongly bend after worldly riches, to these oft-times Christ in justice most liberally applyes himself to give those, according to that of the Psalmist, *Whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure.* According

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ing likewiſe to that, *Solomon. There is a ſore evill which I have ſeen under the Sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt*: Pſal. 17. 11. Eccleſ. 5. 13. The objection being thus anſwered, the argument is ſtill of force. That to have Chriſt with our ſpirits, is the way to all temporal good, and ſo conſequently, *a prime and principal bleſſing.*

But that I may yet more fully ſpeake in this argument, note that temporal good, is either poſitive, or privative: (if I may for illuſtrations ſake ſo diſtinguiſh.) Temporal good in a poſitive ſenſe, is that ſecular thing, which is in it ſelf good: as bread and cloathing, and the like, of which we have already ſpoken.

Temporal good privately ſo call'd, is affliction order'd to a mans good, which in it ſelf is not ſo. Now all thoſe with whoſe ſpirits Chriſt is preſent are partakers of this temporal good.

All

All outward crosses tend to their inward gaine, because Christ is with their spirits. For all outward troubles are heavier or lighter, more hurtful or more profitable still to a man, as Christ is pleased to order his Spirit under them. A little outward trouble, if Christ let it seize upon a mans spirit, he quickly sinks and dyes under his burthen, according to that of the Apostle, *worldly sorrow causeth death.* The losse of a wife or husband; nay, the losse of a child or friend; nay, the losse of the least outward content, if Christ stand aloof from a mans spirit, and let it fasten upon him, he will soon languish, and bleed inwardly to death; whereas all outward afflictions, meeting together upon the outward man, if Christ be with the spirit, to support and beare up that, a Christian sweetly submits, and keeps on his way, according to that of the Apostle, *Rejoycing in hope,*

patient

patient in tribulation, continuing instant in praier: Rom. 12 12. Now Christ tenderly watches, when outward troubles begin to take hold of that spirit, with whom he is specially present, and then he quickly relieves and eases it; and not only so, but sanctifies it, to the drawing of such a spirit nearer to God in love, according to that of *David*, Psal. 116. 1, 2. *I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice, and my supplication, because he hath inclined his eare unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.* Add this to the former, that to have Christ with our spirits, is the ready way to all temporal good, whether *positive* or *privative*; and you must needs grant it to be a principal blessing.

Secondly, those with whose spirits Christ is specially present, are in the ready way to all spiritual good: and therefore thus to have Christ present with our spirits, must needs be connted

ed a principal bleſſing. Chriſt is Author and Worker of all grace, and therefore ſuch ſpirits muſt needs be very gracious with whom Chriſt is, *The Places are holy whereunto the Ark of the Lord doth come*, ſaith *Solomon*, 2 Chron. 8. 11. I may truly ſay it of Chriſt which the Ark typified The ſpirits are holy with whom Chriſt is, and where holy Chriſt comes. They are at the Well-Head for holineſs, which have holy Chriſt with their ſpirits.

They that have Chriſt with their ſpirits, are in the ready way to the very height of heavenly Wiſdom as Chriſt is. With him are all the treaſures of Wiſdom. He that lies in thy boſom, teaching thee Wiſdom ſecretly, came out of the very boſom of the Almighty, and knows all things; and he gives ſuch an unction to that ſpirit which he teaches, that he makes it know and diſcern all things too.

They

They that have Chriſt with their ſpirits, are in the ready way to the very height of love, which is the glory of all Graces in the ſight of God and man: for there is no ſuch Worker and Winner of love as Chriſt is. If he do but *put in his finger by the hole of the door*, he will make a mans bowels melt after him. If he do but reveal his love to our ſpirits a little, our ſpirits grow ſick of love unto him. He will wound us with one of his eyes, ſo full of beauty is he. Let a mans ſpirit be never ſo cold, yet if Chriſt be with it, he is in the ready way to burn with love to Chriſt as ſtrong as death, which many waters cannot quench.

They that have Chriſt with their ſpirits, are in the ready way to the very height of joy and conſolation: They are in the ready way to joy *to unſpeakable and full of glory. Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, &c.* ſaid Chriſt to his diſciples.

Chriſt

Chriſt ſpeaks ſuch things to the ſpirits of thoſe with whom he is preſent, as fills their ſpirits with joy, to the very brim; and this oft-times in the very depth of all outward extremity. The Church doth darkly hint this. *The Comforter which ſhould relieve my ſoul is far from me*: Lam. 1.16. As if the Church had ſaid, though my outward miſery be exceeding great, yet if the comforter did but keep cloſe to my ſpirit, I ſhould have as much conſolation as my heart could hold, in the midſt of all my miſery: but this is my miſery, that the Comforter which ſhould relieve my ſoul is far from me: out of the hearing of ſighs and groans: nay, out of the hearing of ſtrong cryes; *he is angry againſt my prayers*. In a word, a Chriſtian which hath Chriſt with his ſpirit, is in the ready way to *excel in vertue*, as David ſays, to excel in all vertue; to be wiſer than his teachers; more excellent in al

grace then his neighbours. And therefore, to have Chriſt preſent with our ſpirits, muſt needs be counted and called, *A prime and principal bleſſing.*

Laſtly, to have Chriſt with our ſpirits, is the ready way to eternal good; and therefore a principal bleſſing. As a ſtone carres with it whatſoever light thing be faſtned to it, unto its own center; ſo Chriſt whoſe proper place of reſidence is Heaven, carries him thither, all ſuch ſpirits as to whom he is united on earth. If we have a ſpecial friend at Court, we count that we are in a ready way to ſee all the pomp of the Prince. Chriſt hath the Keys of Heaven and Hell; he opens and no man ſhuts; ſhuts, and no man can open: all with whoſe ſpirits he hath dwelt, and been kindly uſed upon earth, he knows; and when they ſhall knock at thoſe everlaſting gates he wil

open and let them into every room in his royal dwelling, and ſhew them all the glory which he had with his Father before the world was. 'Tis between Chriſt and that ſpirit with whom he lives, as between *Naomi* and *Ruth*: where the one lives the other will. Whileſt ſuch ſpirits live in the body, Chriſt will live with them there; when they remove out of the body, Chriſt will not leave them (*death cannot ſeparate*) but commands his Angels to bring them to eternal manſions with himſelf. Chriſt which is lifted up to glory himſelf, will draw up all ſuch unto him, as in whoſe ſpirits he dwels, and no ſtrength ſhal be able to withſtand him; none ſhall pluck ſuch out of his hand. *Vnio cum Chriſto, eſt unio inunibilis.*

If to have Chriſt with our ſpirits be a grand favour, not to have him with our ſpirits, muſt needs be a grand evill. A ſpirit without

Chriſt

Chriſt is naked, as a body without cloaths. Many things may make clothing and defence for the body, but only Chriſt that *beſt garment*, as the Father of the Prodigal calls him, can make clothing and munition for the ſoul. A mans ſpirit without Chriſt is as a naked body amongſt Thorns, every Thorn pierceth, and every bryar ſcratcheth, and fetcheth bloud from ſuch a body; ſo worldly cares and worldly feares, when ſtrong, will pierce ſuch a naked ſpirit thorow and thorow, and make him runne mad. if God (unſought) do not ſeaſonably ſtep in and bridle the Bedlam. A mans ſpirit without Chriſt, is as a naked body amongſt Serpents; every ſerpent ſtings and venoms ſuch a naked body to death; ſo every ſeed of the Serpent ſtings and poiſons to death ſuch naked ſouls, by their threatnings, flatteries, examples, and the like. A mans ſpirit without Chriſt

is as a naked body in great blasts of lightning; such bodies are suddenly scorched and consumed; so such naked souls are suddenly blasted, by the fiery darts of the Devill, and so suddenly oft-times go from burning to burning; from burning in sin to burning in Hell.

A mans spirit without Christ is not only naked, but blinde too. A naked man having his sight, may make some shift; but a man naked and blind too, is in a miserable helpless state indeed: and just such is the state and condition of every mans spirit, that hath not Christ with it: for as the Sunne in the Heavens is the eye and light of the greater world; so the Sun of righteousnes Christ, is the eye and light of the lesser world, Man. Now do but imagine what a dark dolorous condition we should be in, if the Sunne were darkned, or had utterly forsaken our Horizon; or do but think

think of that darkneſs, which was was upon the Ægyptians for a little time, when no man could ſtir out of his place; and ſuch and much worſe is the darke dolorous condition of a ſpirit without Chriſt, nor able to ſee the leaſt beame of ſaving light, not able to ſtir a ſtep out of his place, in the way that leads to life.

A mans ſpirit without Chriſt is not only blind, but dumb too. A man that is blind, yet if he can ſpeak, can beg, or that which he cannot ſee to work for. But when a man is blinde, and dumb too; that he can neither help himſelf, nor beg of others, he is in a doleful condition indeed; and juſt ſuch is the condition of every mans ſpirit that hath not Chriſt with it. For as Chriſt is eys to the ſoul, ſo he is a Mouth and Tongue, enabling to cry *Abba Father*. Unleſs the ſpirit of Chriſt be with our ſpirits,

helping our infirmities, who are godly; we are dumb, and not able to speak to our own Father, as adopted children for dayly bread; more unable to beg for life, to the dreadful Judge of all the world, must all ungodly persons needs be, whose spirits are altogether without Christ, as an helper. I would have all men that live in their sins, think seriously of this; when Christ as the dreadful Judge of all the world at the great day shall aske you, what you have to say for your selves, that you should not eternally dye for your sins, in which you have lived, you wil be like that man whichwas without his wedding garment, dumb and not able to say a word for your selves, becauseChrist is not with your spirits. 'Tis impossible that a mans own guilty spirit should be able to look the terrible Judge of men and devils in the face, much less to speaka word for mercy

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unleſs the Almighty Spirit of Chriſt be with it, to aid it. Many ignorant wretches ſooth themſelvs with this, that they will at laſt cry Lord, Lord, and ſo prevaile quickly for pardon with him, who is infinite in mercy. Why, but think on this O ignorant ſoul! *No man can call Jeſus Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt.* Thou wilt not in thy greateſt need be able to cry Lord, Lord, unleſs the Lord be with thy ſpirit. Death will ſting thee, conſcience will gnaw thee, Chriſt will condemn thee, Devils will tear thee; and yet wilt not thou be able to cry, Lord, Lord, have mercy on me, unleſs the Lord be with thy ſpirit: but inſtead of crying Lord, Lord, for mercy, thou wilt burne in malice againſt the Lord, and curſe and blaſpheme as Devils and damned wretches do. Haſt thou never ſeen condemned wretches not only dumb, but withall, deſperate too: and leap off the ladder themſelvs

without either asking God or man forgiveneſs? Thus in a ſpiritual ſenſe, and much worſe, wilt thou do in the great day of judgement, for as much as Chriſt is not with thy ſpirit.

Fourthly, a mans ſpirit without Chriſt is not onely blind and dumb, but deafe too. And if a man be blind and dumb, yet if he can heare, he may make ſome ſhift to help himſelf: we follow a thing (we know) ſometimes by the ſound, when we cannot ſee it, nor ſpeake what it is: but when a man is naked, Blind, Dumb, and deafe too, he is in a helpleſs condition indeed; and juſt ſuch is the ſtate of a mans ſpirit without Chriſt. For Chriſt, as he is Eyes and Tongue, ſo he is Eares alſo to the ſoul of man. Hence it is that *John* ſpeakes ſo frequently of ſpiritual hearing, after a *Hypotheticall* manner: *He that hath ears, &c.* That is, if any man hav

ſpiritua

ſpiritual diſcerning, *Let him heare what the Spirit ſaith to the Churches.* Intimating that a ſpiritual eare is a very rare thing to be found, that which no man hath, but he which hath Chriſt with his ſpirit, that hath had his eares *bored* by the Spirit of Chriſt, as the Scripture ſpeakes; all others are as deafe as Adders, and cannot heare the voyce of the charmer, charme he never ſo wiſely. I would have all that live in their ſins, ſeriouſly conſider this too, as a further degree of unhappineſs. You tell us that you will turne from your ſins hereafter, and obey the call of God in the Miniſtry of his Word: but let me ask you this; Have you not hitherto turned the deafe eare upon God? Yes: I and ſo you will do for the time to come; and the reaſon of both the ſame; becauſe Chriſt is not with your ſpirit. Let mercies cal, corrections call; let friends call, mother call,

husband call, wife call; let Miniſters call, conſcience call; nay, let Chriſt himſelf cal, in what voice he wil, ſtil voice, or loud voice, in words never ſo pleaſing, or never ſo piercing, yet wilt not thou hear, becauſe Chriſt is not with thy ſpirit; but with *Solomons* fool, wilt on in thy ſins, and be eternally puniſhed.

Fifthly, a mans ſpirit without Chriſt is without *feeling*, in a dead Palſie all over, which how dolorous ſuch a ſtate is in a corporal ſenſe, you know; much more dolorous in a ſpiritual ſenſe, I am ſure. As the ſpirit of man can neither ſee, ſpeak, nor hear, ſo neither can it feel, without the Spirit of Chriſt. The ſpirit of man without the Spirit of Chriſt, is dead. Chriſt is to our ſpirits, as our ſpirits are unto our bodies, their life; and life is the principle of feeling: for the dead feel nothing. *When Chriſt which is our (life) ſhall appeao*, &c. Where there

there is no Chriſt, there is no life; and where there is no life there is no feeling. You know the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome that were *paſt feeling*, having *given them over to laſciviouſneſs, to work all uncleanneſs with greedineſs.* There the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſuch a ſenſleſneſs as lies upon the ſoul by a ſecond act of divine juſtice. All humane ſpirits by the firſt act of divine juſtice upon *Adam*, are naturally paſt feeling, and would give up themſelvs unto all wickedneſs with greedineſs, did not God reſtrain. To be paſt feeling in this latter ſenſe, notes principally a want of divine affection; when ſin doth not kindly afflict the ſoul with ſorrow, as in the former ſenſe, when ſin doth not at all affect the ſoul with ſorrow: when holy ways and works do not kindly affect the ſoul with joy, as in the other ſenſe, when they do not affect the ſoul with joy at all, but rather diſturb and provoke to paſſion and malice.

I would have all that live in their sinnes, seriously think on this also, a further degree of unhappiness. You have heard many powerful Sermons, which you have seen work admirably upon others, and yet they have made no impression upon your spirits: and many hundred more may you heare, and not divine impression at last be made, and the reason of both, one and the same, because Christ is not with your spirits, and by reason of this your hearts are as Adamants, which every stroke hardens, but not breakes it. Let the Master smite, and the man smite; let God smite and his Minister smite, and conscience smite; nay, let every member of the body be smitten with punishment, to affect the soul with sin, yet will it not stir and complain, unless Christ be with it.

Finally, a mans spirit without Christ, is without tasting or smelling

ling: to theſe ſenſes alſo (you know) the Scripture doth allude, and therefore fitly here may I, to ſet forth fully, the unhappy condition of every ſpirit without Chriſt. You know the Apoſtle ſpeakes of ſome, *that ſavoured not the the things of God*; which is a terme applyed in Scripture, to the ſenſe of ſmelling as well as to the ſenſe of taſting, and therefore for brevity ſake do I here joyne both ſenſes together, in a Spiritual way of alluſion. Why all that have not Chriſt with their ſpirits, are ſuch as cannot rightly *ſavour ſpiritual things*; ſuch *put bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter.*

I would have all you that live in your ſin, ſeriouſly think on this too, as a further degree of unhappineſs. You come oft-times to Wiſdomes home, and though ſhe prepare you all Spiritual dainties, yet you can reliſh nothing but ſom by things that

that lie about the dish rather for ornament then for food. And would you know the reason of this? 'tis because Christ is not with your spirits. If Christ were with you, you would feed on every dish at Wisdoms Table, on Promises, yea, and on threatnings too; *To the hungry soul, every bitter thing is sweet*, saith *Solomon*. All that is good and wholsom goes down well, where Christ is with the Spirit. You come frequently to Wisdomes house, who keeps a Table here, and 'twere for a King, and yet you have lean shriveled souls, like men in a Consumption: every one tells you, that you look as if you were starved, speak and live, as if you never heare a good Sermon from years end to years end: they tell you that you are so lean and feeble, that you need the benefit of all the spirits, that every dish as Wisdoms Table can yield, to strengthen you and recover you, and yet every dish almost goes against

gainſt your ſtomacks: and that you do eat is without ſavour or any other vertue, and ſo you languiſh with all dainties before you: and thus you will go on languiſhing, until you quite conſume and periſh eternally, unleſs Chriſt be with your ſpirits.

You ſee (I ſuppoſe) plainly by this time, that as it is a prime and principal happineſs to have Chriſt with our ſpirits; ſo it is a prime and principal evil and unhappineſs not to have Chriſt with our ſpirits. Wherfore having laid open both before you, let me intreat you all to look in upon your ſpirits, and ſee who keeps company with them, Chriſt or the devil; one of theſe two is with all our ſpirits. If Chriſt be not with our ſpirits, the devil is and will be. If Chriſt be with your ſpirits, according to the ſenſe and meaning of the Apoſtle in my text, you ſhall find it by theſe two things, *the body is dead becauſ of ſin, and the ſpirit is life becauſ of righteouſnes*; *Pauls* character

of

of Christs special presence in the soul of man upon earth, and therefore of strong authority; *and if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sins, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.* Rom. 8. 10. The body is dead because of sin: that is, the body of corruption is destroyed, as in respect of the guilt of it, so in respect of the dominion of it. And *the spirit is life because of righteousness*: that is: the regenerate part is *vigorous*, in reference to all righteous wayes.

And if therefore you would know whether Christ be with your spirits, see whether your bodies be dead because of sin: Whether you labour to bring *every thought* into *subjection to Christ*; or whether you do not *allow* your selves liberty to some evill, out of love to some pleasure or profit; which is that principally, wherein the dominion of sin consisteth; as *Paul* hints unto us

us, where he ſaith ; *The evill which I do, I allow not.* That is, I do not approve of it in my heart, nor plead for it with my tongue ; but ſtrive againſt it with all my ſtrength ; and it would be more joy to me, to be rid of it, then if I had a Kingdome conferred to me. This is the language right, of one that hath Chriſt with his ſpirit.

Secondly, ſee whether your *ſpirits be alive becauſe of righteouſneſs*, if you would know whether Chriſt be with your ſpirits or not. See whether holy wayes do heartily affect you. I rejoyced when they ſaid, come let us go to the Houſe of the Lord, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*. He ſpake like a man, having Chriſt indeed with his ſpirit : his ſpirit leapt within him, like the babe in *Elizabeths* womb ; when they ſpake of drawing neere to God, in the duties of his worſhip. A Chriſtian that hath Chriſt with his ſpirit,

ſees

sees a taking transcendent beauty in all VViſdoms ways: *they are all ways of pleaſure, and paths of peace*; which is ſpoken in reference to ſuch as have Chriſt with their ſpirits, for others find no ſuch thing in them. And his Spirit opens in them like flowers in the Sun, and ſmells fragrantly, then bends and cleaves to them in that ſouls ſweetneſs, which he finds in them. And if you find theſe things in you, I think I may ſafely tel you to your comfort, that Chriſt is with your ſpirits.

I may turn this character into another form, as *Paul* doth, and tell you in his words, that *he which is joyned to the Lord is one ſpirit*, 1 Cor. 6.17. They that have Chriſt with their ſpirits are one ſpirit with Chriſt. This expreſſion (*I* conceiv) is ſomthing explain'd by theſe following words; *And the multitude of them that believed, were of one heart and one ſoul*, Acts 4.32. or as the Original hath h

hath it, ἡ καρδία καὶ ψυχὴ μία, *heart & ſoul one*: They that have Chriſt with their ſpirits, are heart and ſoul one with Chriſt. They do *idem velle, & idem nolle.* What Chriſt loves, they love, and what Chriſt hates, they hate; Chriſt loves righteouſneſs, and hates iniquity; *Thou haſt loved righteouſneſs, and hated iniquity, &c.* Pſal. 45. 7. They that have Chriſt with their ſpirits, are heart and ſoul one with Chriſt in this. They love righteouſneſs, that is, all righteous ways: and hate iniquity, that is, all that Gods VVord condemns. 'Twas Chriſts meat and drink, to do his Fathers will: they that have Chriſt with their ſpirits, are one ſpirit with Chriſt in this, *'Tis joy to the juſt to do judgment*, ſaith *Solomon.* Chriſt was tender about keeping the leaſt commandment, as well as about keeping the greateſt. *Whoſoever ſhall break one of the leaſt commandments, and*

and *teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdome of Heaven.* Mat 5. 19. They that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soul one with Christ in this; they are tender to keep all Gods commandments: least as well as greatest, *So shall I not be confounded, whilst I have respect unto all thy Commandments*, saith *David*. I do not conceive the place fore-cited so, as if Christ did account of one part of his Fathers will above another: I rather think that he there speaks *Phariſæorum more*, in the Phariſes dialect, who would make the world beleeve, that they mightily laboured to keep some precepts, but others they thought as many of us now do, that they need not be so strict about. Now Christs tender Spirit for his Fathers honour, could not brook this halting in Religion; and they that have Christ with their spirits, are heart

heart and ſoul one with Chriſt in this. That commandment which the moſt ſay is one of the *leaſt*, and may be diſpenſed withal; or at leaſt need not be ſo ſtrictly look't unto; that, as well as any other, whilſt a pretious part of Chriſts will, a man that hath Chriſt with his ſpirit, wil we tender to obſerve. *Davids* ſpirit ſmote him, for cutting the lap of *Sauls* garment, as well as for cutting off the life of *Vriah*: which plainly ſhews, that men which have Chriſt with their ſpirits, are tender about the avoiding of ſmall ſins, as well as great

Now poſſibly ſome of you by what hath been ſaid, may ſee, that as yet you have not Chriſt with your ſpirits; I ſhall addreſs my ſelf in the firſt place, particularly to ſpeak to you, and then in the ſecond place, I ſhall addreſs my ſelf, particularly to ſpeak to ſuch

such of you, as have by what hath been said, discerned that Christ is indeed with your spirits. To you which by what hath been said, see, that as yet Christ is not with your spirits; I have only these two things to say, labour to bewaile your great want, as persons, deeply sensible of it, and then labour to get this great want speedily supplied.

First, labour to bewaile your great want, as persons deeply affected with it. 'Tis the greatest want in the world, to want Christ to be with a mans spirit. Other wants may be afflicting wants, but this is a damning want. Other wants, may make thee despised of men, but this want will make thee for ever to be abhorred of God. Thou were better want riches, thou were better want honours; nay, thou were better want bread to put in thy head, then want Christ to be in thy heart. Thou wert better want thy deare husband

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thy ſweet Wife to lie in thy boſom, then want Chriſt to lie there. Nay, thy ſoul were better to b without thy body, then to be with ut Chriſt. If there be any want under Heaven that makes a Hell to a man upon earth, it is this; to want Chriſt to be with his ſpirit. For what is that makes hell, Hell? a place full of ſin, and full of miſery? but this: that Chriſt is not with thoſe ſpirits: they are ſpirits everlaſtingly excluded from all communion with Chriſt. Now whereas great wants make you complain heavily, and mourn bitterly, beg the Lord to make theſe things ſink into your ſpirits, that you may be ſenſible of this great want of wants, that your ſpirits are without Chriſt, and ſo without God in this world; that ſo all ſorrow for others wants may meet and run in one channel, to bewail this great want. *Sauls* ſpeech to his ſervant I may fitly allude to,

Come

Come let us returne (said he) *lest my Father leave caring for the Asses, and take thought for us.* If you that mourne for this want, and that want: did but feel the want of Christ with your spirits, you would with *Kish* quickly leave mourning for trifles, and begin to mourne for things of weight. Come O my soul! cease mourning for father and mother, cease mourning for husband and wife, for children and substance, and begin to mourne for this, that thou yet lives Christless, and art in the ready way to dye, and perish remediless.

When you have got your hearts to bleed inwardly, under your great want, then cry mightily to the Lord, and supply it. And to make your prayers prevalent, urge the promise of God, wherein he hath engaged himself to do good in Christ, to them that are *afar off.* Thy soul thou findest farr off from Christ: why,

why, the promiſe (ſaith the Apoſtle) of Chriſt and ſalvation by him is to ſuch. *For the promiſe is to you and to your children, and to all that are* [*afarre off.*] This *Peter* ſpake by way of comfort, as now I do, to ſuch as feir their ſpirits without Chriſt; without grace and hope of glory. Chriſt you ſee is under a general promiſe, and therefore no ſoul ſhould deſpaire of obtaining him. He is promiſed to the Jewes, and not onely to them, but to us Gentiles, who *ſometimes were afarre off*, not to this Gentile or that but to all that are prickt in heart for the want of him. *For the promiſe is to you and to your children, and to all that are afarre off.* Let every one therefore upon this ground, that feels his ſpirit prickt and wounded, for want of Chr ſt; take words to himſelf, and go unto God, and ſay.

O God! my ſoul is a poor Chriſt-

leſs ſoul. I finde by woful experience, that the Lord Jeſus is not with my ſpirit, by reaſon of which I live wickedly to thy diſhonour, and ſhall, I know not how ſoon, die miſerably, to mine own eternal undoing, if thou do not ſhew mercy upon me, according to thy promiſe. Thou haſt ſaid that thou wilt beſtow Chriſt, grace and ſalvation, upon them that are afar off; make good thy gracious promiſe to me, whoſe ſpirit is far from Chriſt, grace and all good; ſo ſhalt thou oblige me for ever unto thee, and I ſhall tell of thy goodneſs as long as I live.

Having thus ſpoken what I thought fit, to ſuch as finde by what was formerly delivered, that Chriſt is not with their ſpirits; I ſhall in the next place ſpeak unto you, that by what was formerly delivered finde, that Chriſt is with your ſpirits. Something by way of

councel, and ſomething by way of Conſolation, *I* have to delver unto you. Three things by way of counſel *I* would commend unto you: *thankfully acknowledge this great favour; carefully preſerv it; and induſtriouſly labour to augment it.*

Firſt, thankfully acknowledg this great favour: 'Tis a pearle of great price, that God hath caſt into thy boſome to give Chriſt to be with thy ſpirit: and for great favours, every one will acknowledge it very fit, and juſt, that they ſhould be thankful. 'Tis a jewel that mhriſt ſcarce gives to one of ten thouſand: and for rare gifts, every one will readily confeſs it to be great ingratitude, not thankfully to acknowledge them. Doeſt thou not heare ſome ſwear, ſome curſe, ſome lye, like their father the devil? Why, thou would'ſt have been ſuch an one, had not God given Chriſt to be with thy ſpirit.

Doeſt thou not ſee ſome Drunkards, ſome Whoremaſters, ſome murderers, ſome perſecutors of the Saints? Why thou would'ſt have been ſuch an one, if God had not given Chriſt to be with thy ſpirit. Doeſt thou not ſee ſome make a God of their belly, ſome make a God of their wealth; ſome proud, ſome mad, ſome putting farre from them the evill day, liveing as if they ſhould never dye? Why, thou wouldeſt have been ſuch an one. had not God given Chriſt to be with thy ſpirit. Doeſt thou not ſee ſome *Nabals*, ſome *Jeſabels*, ſome *Cains*, ſome *Demas's*, ſome *Judas's*? Why, amongſt the number of theſe wouldeſt thou have been, had not God given Chriſt to be with thy ſpirit. Wherefore magnifie the Lord with all thy might, and let all that is within thee praiſe his holy name. Think but how it was with thee, when thy

ſpirit was without Chriſt. How *fooliſh thou waſt ſerving divers luſts*: how the God of this world which rules mightily in the children of diſobedience, did rule mightily in thee. How weake thy ſpirit was, and eaſily overcome and carried captive of every luſt. How drunken thy ſpirit was, and reeled from one opinion to another; one day thou thoughtſt thus and thus, and another day thou thoughtſt quite contrary. I ſay, doe but think of theſe things, and how the Lord migh juſtly have left thee ſtill, to have gone on thus, until thou hadſt periſhed, as he hath done many thouſands, and then be unthankful for the communion of Chriſt with thy ſpirit, if thou canſt. It was this conſideration that ſet *Paul* a wondering at the goodneſs of the Lord. *I was a blaſphemer, a perſecutor, &c. yet I obtained mercy.* He circumflexes this terme [*I*]*yet* [*I*]*obtained*

mercy, &c. It was wonderful in his eye, that God ſhould give Chriſt to dwell with ſuch a bloudy blaſpheming ſpirit, as he had. In this way let us go to work, to raiſe our dull ſpirits, to magnifie the free goodneſs of the Lord: for 'tis a work of all works that God loves. I was a man of a very proud, paſſionate, malicious, uncleane ſpirit; and yet I obtained mercy. God hath given Chriſt to be with this depraved ſpirit, and in a little time he hath done very much and made a manifeſt change in my ſpirit; of very proud, he hath made it in ſome meaſure humble; of very paſſionate, in ſome meaſure patient; of very malicious, in ſome meaſure loveing; of very uncl ane, in ſome meaſure continent. O! the riches of his love; *how unſearchable is his mercy, and his love paſt finding out.*

Secondly, as I would have you thankfully

thankfully acknowledg this great favour, ſo I would have you carefully labour to preſerve it. You find that you have Chriſt with your ſpirits, take heed you do not loſe him. Thou wert better loſe thy life, than loſe the ſpecial preſence of Chriſt with thy ſpirit. Tis a prime and principal bleſſing, as thou haſt heard, a bleſſing of more worth than this world: nay, of more worth than thy ſoul, which Chriſt values above the world. Now choyce things, we are uſually very careful of, and keep them choycely. Chriſt totally (I know) can no man loſe, which hath him after a ſpecial manner, preſent with his ſpirit: but according to ſome prime and principal operations he may: according to others, very far, though not totally. A man may loſe the preſence of Chriſt with his ſpirit totally, as a Comforter.

The Comforter which should relieve my soul is farre from me saith, *Jeremiah*, Lam. 1. 16. in the person of the afflicted Church.] 'Tis probable enough, that *Davids* spirit was thus stript of Christ by his dolorous complaints, which frequently we reade of. *Is his mercy cleane gone for ever? doth his promise faile for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gratious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?* Psal. 77. 8,9. Some carriages in Christians towaards Christ, make Christ totally alter his cariage towards them; though for his promise sake, he will never totally remove himself from them.

As when Christians doe not keep their watch strictly against sin, in all the occasions of it; then Christ, in stead of being a Comforter

ſorter, becomes a convincer; and in ſtead of ſpeaking ſweet things, he ſpeaks very bitter unto the ſoul. This was the caſe of *David* and *Peter*. Or when Chriſtians are careleſs, and ſluggiſh, to maintain and increaſe their ſweet communion with Chriſt, unyeelding to the ſweet motions of the ſpirit of Chriſt, and turning oft-times the deafe eare againſt the ſtill voice behind them, which ſaith, *this is the way, walk in it*. Then Chriſt draws a curtaine between the ſpirit of man and himſelf, and leaves the ſpirit of man in the dark, and full of feares. This is notably illuſtrated by the language of the ſpouſe, *It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, ſaying; Open to me my ſiſter, my Love, my Love, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night*. The Church was convinced of this, that it was her beloved ſeeking neerer

communion with her, and yet observe how she replies, *I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them? I open to my Beloved, but my Beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him but I could not find him, I called him but he gave me no answer:* Cant. 5 You that find the presence of Christ with your spirits, as a comforter, make Christian use of what I have said, that you may still enjoy so great a mercy. And if you lose the Lord Jesus Christ, as comforter to your spirits, miserable comforters will all other things prove unto you. You will mourn, and none will be able to comfort you, if Christ as a comforter forsake your spirit.

Secondly. as a leader, a man may very far lose the communion of Christ with his spirit. As if a Christian take liberty to sin against that

that light, which Chriſt hath ſet up in his ſpirit: this will make Chriſt firſt or laſt (if not timely lookt unto) leave a man to his own underſtanding, to ſteere his courſe; and then will ſuch a man declare himſelf quickly, to be a fool and beaſt, in many points, as *David* ſaith. Have you not ſeen Chriſtians of great light erre in judgement: and erre in practice? Whence comes this weeakneſs, but from hence, that Chriſt as a leader ſtands aloofe from their ſpirit? which is a plain demonſtration that a man may loſe the preſence of Chriſt with his ſpirit, as a leader. *David* (I beleeve) found the truth of this, as wel as of the former, by woful experience. A man may collect toomuch cleerly from his own words. *Caſt me not away from thy preſence, and take not thy holy ſpirit from me*: Pſalme 51. 11. There the ſpirit

of

of God is therefore called by *David* a holy Spirit, becauſe holy in himſelf (the Spirit of the holy God, as he ſaid to *Daniel*) but principally here, as I conceive, *ab officio*: becauſe the worker of holineſs in us. *David* doubtleſs by his fall, found an exceeding weakneſs in his ſpirit, unto all good, over what formerly he did, and ſtrong propenſity again to erre; as every act of ſin, leaves ſeed and ſpawn upon the ſpirit to bring forth more, to cover the firſt, or to commit the like again. But more then all this; he found Chriſt to ſtand aloof from his ſpirit; not exerciſing that ſpeciall dominion in his ſpirit, as before, for the ſubduing of luſt, and ſuggeſting of holy motions and deſires; but leaving him as it were to himſelf, as one with whom he would have no more to do. And therefore doth *David* ſo dolefully com-

complaine, *Caſt me not away from thy preſence, and take not thy* [holy] *ſpirit from me*: you therefore which finde Chriſt with your ſpirits, as a tender leader, take heed of ſinning againſt any part of that light, which he ſets up in your underſtandings; or againſt any motions of his ſpirit, which he ſug geſted unto you; leſt he leave you to your own light, and to your own ſtrength: and then will you run from leſs ſins to greater, from one ſin to another, like *David* and *Peter*, to the ſcandalizing of the Goſpel, and the deſperate wounding of your own ſouls.

The third and laſt thing that I would commend unto you, by way of councel, is this: labour to augment his great favour. You find Chriſt with your ſpirits labour induſtriouſly, to have Chriſt more and more with your ſpirits. 'Tis a prime and principal bleſſing, as

as you have heard, to have Christ with your spirits; therefore labour to get as much of his favour and happiness as possibly you can: Thou hast Christ with thy spirit as a teacher; why thou maist have him yet more t intimate with thee, and open unto thee, in imparting divine mysteries, if thou *follow on to know*, if thou humbly forget, and look over all thou hast, and press hard after more: the things thou knowest not, Christ will teach thy spirit, morning by morning, as by the learned. Christ hath taught thy spirit many truths; why, he will *lead thy spirit into all truth*, if thou urge his promise and beleeve. He will *fill thee with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding*, if thou pray for it, as *Paul* did for the *Colossians*.

Thou findest Christ with thy spirit as Comforter; why thou maist have yet much more consolation from him, if thou study to be more pliable to him. Thou hast Christ di-

stil-

ſtilling drops of conſolation into thy ſpirit, now and then; why thou maiſt have Chriſt pouring in flagons of love into thy ſoul, filling thee with joy unſpeakable and full of glory, if thou bring thy ſpirit to be more lowly and meek; for ſuch finde moſt *reſt to their ſouls*: if thou carefully keep *coming to Chriſt ſtill* in every preſſure of ſpirit; for ſuch finde moſt eaſe: that is, renewing faith ſtill, as thou reneweſt thy ſins.

Thou findeſt Chriſt with thy ſpirit, as a quickner and ſtrengthner ty: why thou maiſt finde him yet more mighty with thy ſpirit this way; if thou poure out thy ſpirit often with *David* for quickning grace: and if thou more deny thine own ſtrength, and caſt thy ſelf more upon his. Could we but attain *Pauls* height in ſelf-denial, to be nothing in our ſelvs (*though I am nothing* (ſaith he) we ſhould finde Chriſt glorioufly preſent ſtil with our ſpirits, & be more conſtant in zeal and ſtrength

to

every good work, then we are. I conclude this thus, be so tractable to Christ, that thou mayst with *Mary* win upon Christ still; and think that thou canst never be neer enough to him, nor intimate enough with him; and this is the ready way, to have a Heaven upon earth: for the more we get Christ to be with our spirits, the more truly may we be said to be in Heaven.

The last thing that I have to say to you, that find Christ with your spirits, is matter of consolation. Here is comfort for you against famine. When thy body wants food, Christ that is with thy spirit, will give that meat to eat, which the world knows not of; so that when others repine, and *curse God and their King* in their extremity, as the Prophet speakes; thou shalt be patient in prayer to him, who can command Ravens to bring

ing thee bread and fleſh to feed on; and will, rather then thou ſhalt ſtarve, if thy life may be more to his glory, then thy death.

Here's comfort for you againſt the ſword. In the midſt of all troubles and fears, Chriſt that is with thy ſpirit will bear thee up admirably. What is the face of an enemy to terrifie; if Chriſt be with thy ſpirit. What is the ſpoiling of thy goods? nay, what is the ſpoiling of thy body, if Chriſt be with thy ſoul? A Mountain of miſery, is but as a Mole-hill, if Chriſt ſupport the ſpirit. To think of the Sword is a naked reference to fleſh and blood, and ſo nothing is more terrible: but let us that feare the Lord think of it, in reference to Chriſt that is with our ſpirits, and then we ſhall not be troubled, though we heare of Wars and rumours of Warres, no more then

then at the rumours of any other calamity.

Here is comfort for you against the Plague, here and there scattered in the Kingdom. What is any disease to the body, if Christ be with thy soul? As the outward man decayed, the inward man shall be renewed daily, because Christ is with thy spirit. When thy body is full of pain, thy soul shall be full of comfort, because Christ is with thy spirit. When thy body is sealed with spots of death, thy soul shall be sealed with the Holy Ghost unto eternal life, because Christ is with thy spirit. The Plague of the body is nothing, if this Plague of Plagues be not upon the spirit, to wit, destitute of Christ.

Here is comfort for you against persecution. When men frown upon thee without, Christ will smile upon thy spirit within: when men lade the outward man with reproaches

proaches, Chriſt will fill thy inward man with comforts: when men ſhut up thy body from the communion of Saints, Chriſt will give thy ſpirit a large freedom of communion with himſelf. When men ſtrike thy body, Chriſt will ſtroke thy ſoul: when men kill thy body, Chriſt will ſave thy ſoul. In a word, as the afflictions of Chriſt abound in thy body, ſo the conſolations of Chriſt ſhall abound in thy ſoul, becauſe Chriſt is with thy ſpirit. Name any miſery that is incident to man, and here's comfort to be ſuckt out of this point, to oppoſe unto it. Finally, in life, in death, and eternally after death, Chriſt that is with thy ſpirit will be gain unto thee. Thy life he will make comfortable, thy death hopeful; thy being after death eternally joyful. Wherefore I will

will conclude my Sermon for the good of you, as Saint *Paul* doth his Epistle for the good of *Timothy*. *The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirits.*

Trinuni Deo gloria.

FINIS.